Thursday March 13 1997

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The Guardian

INTERNATIONAL

NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ... SERIAL DIVISION

Primary Colors, the movie

Shooting Clinton

G2 with European weather

Four pages of books in G2

Seamus Deane on Yeats

Plus Julian Critchley on Lord McAlpine

G2 pages 8/11

OnLine

Have scientists gone too far?

G2 pages 12/13

Dunblane: the nation remembers

“We will never forget them and it will never be the same again. We changed forever in ways that we don't know yet but we have to move on because we have new generations coming forward now. There will be no service because we don't need a special day to remember. We remember them every day”

Ron Taylor, head of Dunblane primary school

Day of remembrance: One year after Thomas Hamilton wreaked havoc on a small town in Stirlingshire, the nation was asked to pause today to remember the victims of the Dunblane massacre. The local community, which has asked to be left in peace during the anniversary, has invited people to light a candle in the window of their homes at 7pm to mark the occasion. Seventeen candles, pictured above, one for each of Hamilton's victims, will burn throughout the day at Dunblane cathedral PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS BACON

Hogg defies calls for resignation

Ewen MacAskill, Chief Political Correspondent

THE embattled Minister of Agriculture, Douglas Hogg, survived calls for his resignation in the Commons yesterday, in spite of a fresh batch of leaked letters detailing serious food safety offences.

Mr Hogg, forced to the Commons to make his second statement in a week because of growing public worry about the state of abattoirs in the wake of the BSE and *E. coli* outbreaks, announced a quickly cobbled-together "action plan" to drive up standards.

The letters, sent directly to Mr Hogg from Northumberland County Council but to which he had not bothered to reply, complained of a shortage of trading standards officers to enforce BSE regulations. As a result, lots of meat labelled as lamb and other BSE-free products in the north of England had in fact contained beef.

Amid cries from the Opposition of "resign" and "burn the Hogg", he dismissed as misleading reports of declining standards at Britain's much-criticised abattoirs.

"I do not pretend that there is not scope for further improvement," he said, adding that the Government "had been and remain determined to drive up standards, and we are succeeding".

Douglas Hogg: announced action plan on abattoirs

His eight-point plan was aimed at "targeting both the most serious problems and the plants with particular difficulties", and included such measures as stepping up attendance by veterinary surgeons at abattoirs with poor records.

Among the points were obvious ones that most of the public would assume were already in force, such as: "It must be clearly understood that no carcase showing any signs of faecal contamination should be submitted for approval as fit for human consumption."

Mr Hogg, one of the most unpopular ministers in the Government whose fall would be welcomed by many Tory backbenchers, owed his survival to the promixity of the general election, with John Major due to confirm soon that it will be May 1.

Although only a few Conservative MPs were present, they loyally swung behind Mr Hogg in the Commons. Privately, they said that they only supported him because they did not want to give the Opposition a scalp so close to the election.

The shadow agriculture minister, Gavin Strang, said: "There is no confidence in you, nor in your government, as far as food safety standards are concerned." But he failed to land a killer blow.

The Liberal Democrat leader, Paddy Ashdown, said: "Were it not for the shadow of the general election, Mr Hogg would be on his way."

Mr Major showed the first sign yesterday that his patience with Mr Hogg was close to exhaustion when he personally intervened to order the Ministry of Agriculture to produce a comprehen-

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Anorexic girl forced into clinic

Clare Dyer
Legal Correspondent

A HIGH Court judge has ordered a 16-year-old anorexic girl to be detained at a special clinic — by force if necessary — for treatment aimed at getting her weight back to normal.

Mr Justice Wall made the ruling following a private hearing in the Family Division of the High Court last week, but gave permission yesterday for the judgment to be reported.

The judge said the girl, one of five children, started worrying about her weight when she was 12. By the time she was 14 she was suffering from anorexia. In addition, she had also been a victim of long-term sexual abuse by a brother, he said. The girl cannot be identified.

Her history of eating problems included vomiting, taking laxatives, and absconding from clinics where she was being treated. On one occasion she threatened to commit suicide and had to be prevented from throwing herself off a balcony.

Last November, the girl was admitted to hospital as an emergency after it was discovered she had eaten only a few slices of cucumber in 10 days. The judge said doctors claimed the girl had the ability suddenly to stop eating and drinking, and put herself at risk of collapse — and of death within the following three to seven days.

But it was hoped she could gain weight and ultimately be discharged if she were to remain at the clinic.

The girl had said she was prepared to stay in the clinic and undergo the treatment — but did not want to be ordered to do so by the courts. But doctors had said they were not prepared for the girl to remain at the clinic and be treated without a court order because she could withdraw her consent at any time.

The ruling breaks new ground in deciding that the court has jurisdiction to order a child to be detained, without complying with the requirements in the 1989 Children Act.

Safeguards in the act, laid down to comply with the European Convention on Human Rights, provide that children can only be held in secure accommodation if they have a history of absconding and are likely to abscond again.

The court must also be satisfied that the child is likely to suffer significant harm if he absconds, and is likely to injure himself or others if not kept in secure accommodation. Regulations made under the act also lay down limits on the time a child can be detained.

The judge held that the regime at the clinic did not involve secure accommodation, and that the court had power as part of its inherent jurisdiction over children to order the girl to be detained. The ruling does not cover force-feeding, which is not part of the regime.

Mr Justice Wall said: "I have no doubt that I have the power not only to direct that she reside in the clinic but also to authorise the use of reasonable force [if necessary] to detain her in the clinic."

He had no doubt it was in the girl's best interests to be treated in the clinic, and was satisfied that detention was an essential component of the treatment.

If a court was satisfied that an order of this nature was necessary, it should not hesitate to use its powers in the way he was using them, the judge added.

The application for the order was made by the local authority in the region where the girl lives, although she is not in the authority's care. Her parents, who wanted her to be detained, were also represented in court.

MPs can keep bleepers if they don't bleep

BRIAN WILSON, Labour's campaigns spokesman, was yesterday reprimanded by the Commons Speaker, Betty Boothroyd, for using information sent to him via his electronic bleeper during a parliamentary exchange at the dispatch box.

But Miss Boothroyd agreed to let MPs continue to carry paging devices — provided that they are turned off or switched onto "vibrate" only — both in the Chamber and in committee hearings.

Mr Wilson provoked fury on the Conservative benches on Tuesday when he used a message relayed via his pager into the Chamber by a party researcher to raise a point of order following Prime Minister's Question Time.

Tory MPs were upset by the way Mr Wilson read openly from the screen on his pager as he stood at the dispatch box. The message had been sent by the researcher monitoring Question Time from the party's "rebuttals unit" at nearby Millbank.

The researcher discovered that the Tory backbencher John Greenway, who had asked the Prime Minister a question about the insurance industry, was a paid consultant to the Institute of Insurance Brokers, and passed this fact on to Mr Wilson.

Speaker rebukes MP, page 2

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Sketch

Hogg waits for the slaughter

Simon Hoggart

DOUGLAS HOGG clearly does not get it, so someone has to rub his nose in it. Tony Banks did. As animal rights protesters shouted from the Gallery, Mr Banks pointed out that it was impossible to avoid faecal pollution in abattoirs because cattle waiting to be slaughtered can smell death. This causes them to urinate and to defecate.

Warming up, he added: "I say that if the minister was standing in line waiting to die, he would fill his underpants, and probably has." Then, like a Southern Baptist preacher wailing and crying unto the Lord, he called upon the people of Britain to renounce meat and to turn vegetarian, "before they are all as mad as the minister".

Some MPs might have felt sorry for Mr Hogg being subjected to such an unpleasant attack. Yet there is something about his manner, his arrogance, his smugness, his utter refusal to accept any blame for anything at all, which makes it hard for anyone to feel sympathy. I have heard it said that he is much nicer than he appears, and it may be true. Such elaborate nastiness gives the impression of having been learned, as if from a cut-price postal course.

His father, Lord Hailsham, had sat for some time in the Peers' Gallery, which I thought was a fine and brave gesture, like a mother feeling she had to go to Tyburn to see her highwayman son hanged in public. But even he had left before young Douglas rose.

There were very few Tories behind him, a mere handful briefed to ask supportive questions. Tony Blair was facing him, but John Major was evidently engaged elsewhere. He must have felt very lonely as he began the last, long walk to the Dispatch Box (for nobody imagines that, whatever the result, Mr Hogg will be a minister on May 2).

His line, as ever, was that everything was getting better and that the various recent scares were all got up by the Labour Party. The frightening leaked documents were dismissed scornfully as "pieces of paper . . . they may yet produce more such documents and I suppose they will. I will not speculate as to the motives behind their production, but the proximity of a general election is perhaps one of them . . ." (This elaborate, sub-Oxford Union, sarky barrister style is just one of the many intensely annoying things about Mr Hogg.)

He was fortunate that Labour's reply, from Gavin Strang, was not exactly Ciceronian, and made more confusing by repeated references to the declining number of "state vests" — not the final manifestation of the nanny state, but apparently a reference to official vets.

Mr Hogg got angry. He waved faxes at us. He scrunched up over the box, like a witch's toad guarding her treasure. His voice rose to a querulous bark. When Labour backbenchers pointed out that the Government had ignored repeated warnings about food safety, he began to squeak: "He is missing the point. Some might say he was evading it, but I will be more charitable and say that he is *missing* the point." I know barristers are paid to spin cases out, but this was getting ridiculous.

A deeply helpful intervention by my old friend Mickey Fabricant — by a strange coincidence, he too blamed Labour and seemed to imply that it was their electioneering which was driving the innocent owners of filthy abattoirs out of business — drove Mr Hogg to further rage: "scaremongering . . . irresponsible, ill-informed and ill-intentioned . . ."

"Come on Swampy, stop digging!" shouted Dennis Skinner. But it was left to Mr Banks to precede his cloacal question with the unanswerable point that the many people in Scotland who have died of E-coli had "not been scared to death: they were poisoned". No doubt, Mr Hogg might have felt in his more paranoid moments, they died as part of another disgraceful New Labour stunt to win power.

Summit 'voice but no veto' deal aims to reassure Russians about Nato expansion into old Soviet bloc

US offers Yeltsin G7 role

Martin Walker in Washington

A FORMAL invitation to join the G7 summit table, though not to participate in finance meetings, is to be extended to Boris Yeltsin at next week's Helsinki summit with President Clinton as a final inducement to Russia to swallow Nato's enlargement into eastern Europe.

The proposal is expected to dominate preliminary talks with the Russian foreign minister, Yevgeny Primakov, who arrives in Washington tomorrow to hammer out the terms of a Nato-Russian charter.

A Kremlin spokesman said yesterday that President Yeltsin was cancelling other appointments and "easing his schedule" in preparation for the Helsinki summit.

The largely cosmetic American proposal — which ratifies existing custom and would exclude Russia from regular meetings of finance ministers — is being described in official circles in Washington as "more G8 minus one than G7 plus one".

The plan is being presented by the Clinton administration less as a way to salve Russian pride than as proof of its insistence that Nato enlargement is not a military alliance aimed at Russia, but the creation of a European and transatlantic system of collective security in which Russia holds an honoured place.

"There is no simple quid pro quo to exchange G7 status for Russian acquiescence. We have been working to enlarge Russia's G7 role since Mikhail Gorbachev first attended the 1991 London summit," said one official involved in the discussions yesterday.

One crucial condition raised by Japan and other G7 members fell into place this week when Mr Yeltsin appointed the economic reformer Anatoly Chubais first deputy prime minister with sweeping new powers to accelerate economic liberalisation.

This change helps explain Mr Clinton's private optimism that the Russian economy is poised for dramatic growth and recovery.

Concessions are coming thick and fast from both sides with each equally determined to make the summit a success. Russia has said it will not insist that the charter with Nato is a legally binding document formally ratified by national parliaments, and a "binding document" will be acceptable.

The charter is designed to give Russia "a voice, but not a veto" in the affairs of an enlarged Nato. It provides for a Russian liaison office at Nato HQ in Brussels, monthly meetings of officials and less frequent meetings of foreign and defence ministers, and joint operations in key fields such as peacekeeping, anti-terrorism, nuclear proliferation and the environment.

The timetable for agreement is becoming crowded because President Clinton wants to settle the Nato question before the G7 summit in Denver at the end of June. Officials are now discussing a further Russia-Nato summit, possibly in May. If all goes well, there could be Russian participation in the Nato summit in Madrid in July, at which the formal invitations to new members will be extended. Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic are widely expected to be in the first wave, while strong bids are also being made by Slovenia and Romania.

Much of the negotiating detail was completed in Moscow on Sunday by the Nato secretary-general, Javier Solana. He held out a series of confidence-building measures to Mr Primakov to assure Russia that Nato has no hostile intentions. These include the prospect of sharing intelligence photographs and inviting Russian observers to Nato exercises and air traffic control centres.

Russia still opposes Nato enlargement in principle, but in practice is trying to negotiate the best available deal. Mr Primakov is seeking some form of assurance that the Baltic states, formerly Soviet territory, will not join Nato in a second wave of enlargement, at least while Russia remains concerned about the treatment of ethnic Russian minorities there.

The outstanding issue of Ukraine, which is also to be offered its own charter with Nato rather than membership, remains a potential hurdle. Unlike the Baltic states, forcibly merged into the Soviet Union during the second world war, Ukraine has been Russian territory since the early 18th century, and its status presents Russia with acute security problems.

Labour's Brian Wilson, above, who used a pager to raise a point of order about Tory John Greenway, below

Speaker rebukes MP over pager tip-off

Hi-tech prompting and bleeps ruled out of order in Commons

Rebecca Smithers and Michael White

THE Speaker of the House of Commons yesterday reprimanded one of Tony Blair's senior election advisers for using information sent to him via his electronic pager for a parliamentary exchange at the dispatch box.

But Betty Boothroyd accepted the inevitable progress of new technology as she agreed to let MPs carry their ubiquitous paging devices — provided that they are turned off or switched onto "vibrate" only — both in the Chamber and in committee hearings.

Brian Wilson, Labour's election campaigns spokesman, sparked fury on Tory benches on Tuesday when he used a message relayed into the chamber via his pager by a party researcher to raise a point of order following Prime Minister's Question Time. Many were offended by the way Mr Wilson read openly from his pager screen at the dispatch box.

The party researcher had been monitoring Question Time from the party's "rebuttals unit" at nearby Millbank. He established that Tory MP John Greenway, who had asked the Prime Minister a question about the insurance industry, was a paid consultant to the Institute of Insurance Brokers, and passed this fact on to Mr Wilson.

Yesterday the Speaker said: "I strongly deprecate such practice. For any member to be prompted in this way by an outside group is totally unacceptable."

While acknowledging that she could not stop MPs from carrying pagers, Miss Boothroyd urged them to turn off those which made a noise, telling the House: "I can have no objection to instruments which merely vibrate to attract the attention of the bearer. Provided they are silent I can have no objection to such devices and even if I had an objection I could not prevent Members from bringing them into the Chamber.

"I am not, however, prepared to accept the use of such instruments as an aide-memoire by a member who is addressing this House." She said the rule would also apply to all Commons' committees, although not to MPs with a declared disability.

Last night Mr Wilson pointed out that his pager had vibrated in the Chamber, rather than bleeped, and explained that he had been forced to use the information immediately to catch points of order. "As I understand it, it will be all right in future to receive information but not to use it," he said. "I will of course respect the Speaker's ruling."

MPs were divided yesterday over the incident. Traditionalists on both sides were outraged. Modernisers who like to rely on the odd written note supported Mr Wilson, although they conceded he had acted clumsily.

Westminster has belatedly been "wired" for cable transmission of debates in both chambers, satellite TV, computerised access to Parliament's library system, and Internet websites. MPs — and their young staffers — are beginning to catch up.

Ministers have long relied on the human equivalent of a computer "search engine" in the shape of civil servants who sit — out of sight of the TV cameras — in the "box" behind the government front bench, feeding answers and advice to ministers on the hot spot. Opposition MPs do not enjoy this perk.

The sight of an official note being passed to a minister by his colleagues or a backbench PPS is a familiar one. What is more intriguing is the scale and speed of Labour's computerised "instant rebuttal" operation which provides instant and detailed refutation of allegations made against spokesmen, and quotes which give the lie — or the wider context — to remarks quoted by the other side.

In extreme cases Labour issues verbatim texts of an embarrassing ministerial broadcast, to help the media turn the interview into an instant "gaffe" or "split".

Last night one computer-literate MP, Labour's Ann Campbell, said: "I think the use of pagers should be legitimate and that we should not be unduly alarmed. It's no different from taking in a sheaf of briefing papers, which also amounts to relying on external sources. No MP can carry around all the information they need."

Commons rules

MPs can't:
- ☐ read from notes when asking a question
- ☐ eat or drink
- ☐ clap or shout from a 'sedentary position' (in theory)
- ☐ criticise the Queen or judges
- ☐ appear without a jacket on, though open-necked shirts and sandals are OK
- ☐ refer to "strangers" who may be present, in the public or press galleries
- ☐ address each other by name as distinct from Hon. Member etc
- ☐ die in a Royal Palace such as Westminster. Even if you drop dead at the dispatch box, death is always recorded on arrival at hospital
- ☐ go bankrupt
- ☐ refer to another MP as a hooligan, blackguard, liar, jackass, cad, insulting dog, swine or guilty of "pecksniffian cant" (etc)

Government to review pension rules for war deaf

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

THE Government yesterday agreed to review its controversial decision to tighten the rules on war pensions for deafness after welfare groups said it had become almost impossible for people to qualify.

Disability and ex-service organisations last night promised to keep up pressure so that the issue, on which ministers are in acute difficulty, would not be buried until after the general election.

The review was offered in talks between Lord Mackay of Ardbrecknish, the Social Security Minister, and leaders of the Royal British Legion and the Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID).

Hearing experts who attended the talks said Lord Mackay had apologised for misrepresenting their research in support of the Government's position. They have been invited to join the review.

Although the reassessment is a step forward for the campaign against the tighter rules, welfare groups expressed disappointment that it would not be independent and that the rules would not be suspended pending its outcome.

Both Labour and the Liberal Democrats yesterday gave commitments to a fully independent review.

Lord Ashley of Stoke, the RNID president, said: "This is a totally unsatisfactory situation which will leave veterans in the lurch when they should already be receiving a war pension as a result of exposure to noise during service."

Terry English, controller of welfare for the British Legion, said it would press on with efforts to test the Government's decision in the courts. "Our application for judicial review is with the courts now and we are awaiting the outcome," he said.

The rules were changed, without consultation and retrospectively to last March, after the Guardian disclosed in December that ministers were braced for a "storm" over the move, which saves £35 million a year.

The change, which the Government has insisted was based entirely on medical opinion, was part of a £50 million package of war pension cuts. Ministers have already backed down on some other measures, including a plan to abolish war widows' rent allowance.

Ministerial correspondence seen by the Guardian showed that Peter Lilley, the Social Security Secretary, was urging "sweeteners" to appease ex-service groups.

One proposal was the payment of a £250,000 grant towards restoration of the Chaseley nursing home for disabled war veterans in East Sussex. Yesterday, only hours before his meeting with the welfare groups, Lord Mackay announced just such a grant.

Under the tighter deafness rules, pensions are payable only if a member of the armed forces is assessed as having a hearing loss of at least 20 per cent, attributable to military service, before leaving uniform.

No pension can be awarded in later life and no pension can be increased as hearing detriorates. Ministers say this is because subsequent hearing loss cannot be attributed to exposure to noise while in the forces.

Hearing experts say this misrepresents their views and they argue there must be allowance for the compound effect of age-related hearing loss on top of damage sustained in military service.

Review

Editor's Freudian slip is showing

Michael Billington

Lady in the Dark
Lyttelton Theatre

FAMOUS as the first and possibly the only musical about psychotherapy, Lady in the Dark has a distinguished pedigree: book by Moss Hart, lyrics by Ira Gershwin and music by Kurt Weill.

But watching Francesca Zambello's rare revival of this 1941 Broadway show at the National, I felt I was seeing a dated, if fascinating, curiosity: a collector's item rather than a blazing masterpiece such as the adjacent Guys and Dolls.

As so often with musicals, the real problem lies in the book.

Moss Hart's original story concerns Liza Elliott, a Vogueish New York magazine editor who puts herself in the hands of a Freudian analyst to root out her nagging sense of anxiety.

Why is she so wedded to her work? Why does she power-dress in austere suits while editing a glamour magazine? And why is she unable to commit herself to the devoted proprietor ready to ditch his wife for her sake?

The answer, of course, lies in her childhood and adolescent sense of rejection by parents and fellow students when she was made to feel an unwanted Plain Jane.

Liza's initial question to her shrink of "What does it matter about the way I feel?" dogs the whole musical. Given her status, success and authority, it is difficult to get too worked up about her privileged despair.

To modern eyes and ears there is also something faintly patronising about the notion that a woman cannot simultaneously be an executive editor and a sexual enchantress.

In truth, it is a rather invertebrate musical, in which the dream sequences grow awkwardly out of Liza's periodic couch sessions.

Its saving grace is Weill's score, which allies the emotional plangency of his Berlin period to Broadway idioms.

Its most celebrated numbers are the robustly witty Saga of Jenny and the haunting My Ship, but easily its best is Girl of the Moment, which liltingly advances the plot by exploring Liza's fantasy notion of herself as the world's inamorata.

The other good reason for seeing the show, as with Sondheim's Passion, is Maria Friedman's stellar performance. She actually persuades you that inside the professionally masterful but emotionally dithering Liza lurks a badly bruised spirit.

She sings the big numbers with a direct lyric simplicity and allows her Guiletta Massina-like clown instinct to emerge in a circus sequence where she cavorts with the pawkiness with a wild-eyed child. The evening belongs unequivocally to her, though there is good support from Charlotte Cornwell as a wise-cracking colleague and from Adrian Dunbar as an abrasive advertising editor.

Zambello's production boasts pleasant sets from Adrianne Lobel in the shape of floating yacht-like sails.

But the final impression is of an eccentric oddball among Broadway musicals rather than of a show that revolutionised the genre by its excursion into the dark recesses of the psyche.

This review appeared in some editions yesterday.

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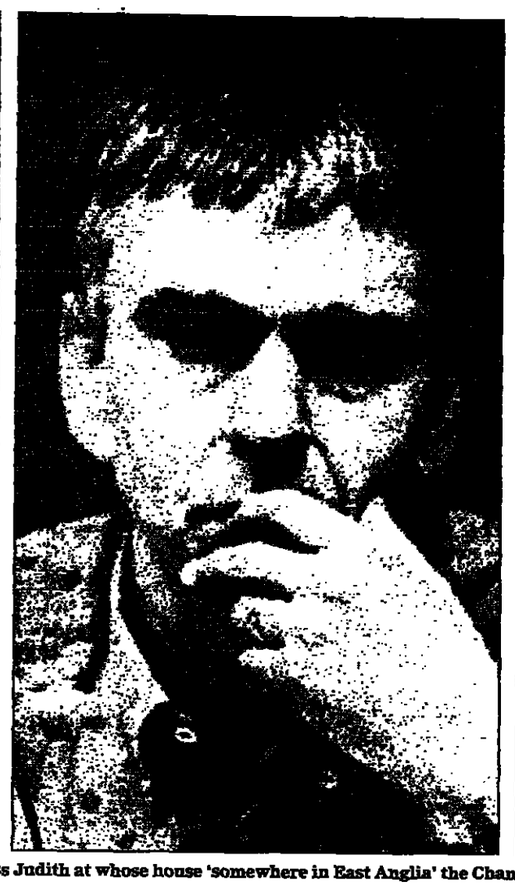
Party political broadside



Stomachs for strong debate . . . George, left, Jon and hostess Judith at whose house 'somewhere in East Anglia' the Channel 4 documentary was shot. 'These people are very angry and very disillusioned,' said film-maker Paul Watson

Eat, drink, be bigoted, tomorrow we vote

Luke Harding on a television documentary that claims to expose the true feelings of a group of typical Tory voters in run-up to election

The old friends all felt nostalgia for the Thatcher years

THEY are called Catherine, Henry, Bill, Bridget, George, Richard, Judith and Jon. Do not, on any account, invite them round for dinner — unless you are Alf Garnett, that is.

The eight Tory voters are the subject of a fly-on-the-wall documentary by film-maker Paul Watson to be screened this month by Channel 4.

Mr Watson claims the group are "fairly representative" of rank-and-file Tory supporters. If he is right, John Major is surely finished.

Over a dinner of pork in caramelised apple with Calvados, prawn St Jacques and triple chocolate pudding, the eight launch a relentless attack on gays, blacks, beggars and the unemployed. The fact they are being filmed by two cameras appears to have been no deterrent.

Across the candlelit table they discuss the nightmare of an "equal society" and their fears that the unemployed will "always be with us".

Bridget claims she is "not a homophobe" but says "gays are a freak of nature". Henry pines for a "benevolent dictator" who would make the tricky business of governance "an awful lot cheaper", while Richard opines that "we don't want fucking queers in the army." "Why not chemically castrate them," Bill rejoins.

George avers that "we have to stop people coming in just because they have a British passport".

Filmed at the house of Judith and Bill somewhere in East Anglia three weeks ago, the documentary shows the group of old friends — ranging from 31 to 50 — gathering to discuss the state of the nation in the run-up to the election.

They agreed to be filmed by Mr Watson after answering an advert in the Sunday Telegraph. The advert appealed for readers to be "un-British" and speak out about their political views. Similar adverts were also placed in the Times and the Daily Mail two months ago. Hundreds of people came forward, but the majority "bottled out", according to Granada, which produced the last in the series of Cutting Edge films.

Documentary maker Paul Watson shot to fame after making Sylvania Waters, a waspish portrait of a rich, high-living Australian housewife, Noelene Donahar. She accused him of character assassination and the furore over the documentary contributed to his dismissal from the BBC after 28 years.

Describing himself yesterday as a "wishy-washy" Liberal voter, he denied he had "stitched up" the group and said they were unlikely to retract their views once the film went out.

"People have a rope and they sometimes hang themselves with it," he said. "Sometimes they make a cat's cradle instead."

The eight Tories are nostalgic for the days of Lady Thatcher, but will unhesitatingly vote for John Major at the election. Black people and gay rights get short shrift. "I'm not keen on black Rastafarian Africans and yet I find the Asian community delightful. The Africans always have their hand out," said one.

In the 50-minute film, The Dinner Party, to be shown on March 24, the eight are identified only by their first names.

The problems of John Major's Britain are thoroughly analysed. Eighties-style money-grabbing is seen as a virtue. "If people want to be greedy, they are entitled to be greedy," Bill points out affably. Bridget, meanwhile, has strong views on the poor: "As Jesus is reported to have said, the poor will always be with us. I am afraid the unemployed will always be too."

Bill chips in: "Tory policies are much more for the good of the country." And then there is Catherine. "An equal society is not one I would like to see in my lifetime." And that nice Mr Blair? "I think he has been told not to smile because he looks like a prat."

Mr Watson yesterday denied he had made a piece of Labour propaganda. "My reaction to that is 'ho, ho ho'. These people are very angry. They are very disillusioned. But I also despair at them.

"I want a lot of people to cheer and say 'At last someone has the balls to put out the Conservative credo. Others will say it is time to switch, and time for the Conservatives to go."

Neither the Labour Party, nor Conservative Central Office, was prepared to comment on the film.

The partygoers

Judith
Age: 34
Job: Professional cook
Views: "I don't believe that anybody is genuinely poor."

Bill
Age: 41
Job: Unemployed
Views: "If people want to be greedy they are entitled to be greedy."

Catherine
Age: 31
Job: Estate agent
Views: "An equal society is not one I think I would love to see in my lifetime."

Henry
Age: 44
Job: Petrol pump attendant
Views: "I don't feel that being the son of baronet or having an Etonian education has ever been a hindrance."

Richard
Age: 32
Job: Insurance broker
Views: "We don't want fucking queers in the army."

Bridget
Age: 36
Job: Medieval history lecturer
Views: "As Jesus is reported to have said, the poor will always be with us."

Jon
Age: 41
Job: Musician
Views: "I think the whole essence of your average Tory is 'I'm all right Jack'."

George
Age: 50
Job: Publican
Views: "We have to stop people coming in just because they have a British passport."

Bank bonuses rise to £225,000

City concern grows as traders scoop up to £1 million a year

Julia Finch

THE scale of bonus payments to City bankers was revealed yesterday when Schroders, the leading British investment bank, disclosed that payouts to around 1,000 staff had increased by £45 million — an average £45,000 a head.

Chairman Win Bischoff revealed that bonus payments were up a fifth this year, putting the average bonus at £225,000. One trader has netted a bonus of more than £1 million, while several were paid £1 million in salary and bonus combined.

The average remuneration at the bank, which employs 4,711 staff, is running at nearly £90,000 a head, up from just less than £75,000 a year ago. This includes secretaries and backroom staff.

Details of the Schroders' bonuses — revealed as the bank reported annual profits up 21 per cent to £239 million — come amid mounting concern, and bitterness, over the scale of City payouts.

Many believe the huge pay cheques encourage traders to take too many risks in order to achieve their bonus targets.

Last month a Bank of England report confirmed fears that the vast rewards to be earned by top traders could expose their employers to substantial risks and losses. The bank's report came as NatWest Bank discovered a £50 million "black hole" caused by one alleged rogue trader.

Yesterday Mr Bischoff said that despite the Bank of England's warnings, there were no plans to alter Schroders' bonus structure. He pointed out that it was operated on a deferral system, so that the biggest bonuses were paid in two parts: an instant cash payment with the balance of a bonus retained for up to three years.

However, there is no deferral element for those whose salary and bonus totals less than £75,000. They are regarded as lower earners.

A new survey, published yesterday, showed that more than six out of 10 UK financial directors want City bonuses curbed. Only one in five was against any control on the potentially huge cash rewards.

The poll of 200 finance chiefs, carried out by recruitment specialist Reed Accountancy Personnel and Accountancy Age magazine, also revealed the increasing bad feeling towards City dealers. The survey reported comments such as "It devalues the real efforts of those who make the money which traders move around". Others referred to the "greed culture" of the City's high-flyers.

An increasing number of fund managers are also becoming alarmed at the scale of bonuses and the risks bankers may take in order to achieve them.

Some have suggested pruning back the rewards system, or insisting that bonuses are based on team, rather than individual, performance. Others want penalty fines for those who "overachieve" to prevent traders from taking irresponsible gambles.

Details, page 11

Hogg defies demands for his resignation over food scares

continued from page 1

sive report of its handling of food safety.

Labour piled on the pressure with a claim that Mr Hogg had failed to respond to dire warnings from Northumberland trading standards officers about their inability to properly police meat safety regulations.

Northumberland trading standards officer John Richards said he first wrote to Mr Hogg asking for extra money because trading standards officers were overwhelmed with work enforcing meat safety regulations.

The letters, leaked by Labour's consumer affairs spokesman, Nigel Griffiths, said: "The trading standards service is already under extreme pressure and there is no scope for redirecting resources." They added: "A significant number of serious breaches of the legal requirements have been discovered."

Mr Griffiths said: "If Mr Hogg is not reading dire reports like this, we're entitled to ask if he's reading anything."

The Minister of Agriculture came close to accusing trading standards officers of framing their request in an attempt to win more cash.

Mr Hogg said he was not aware of having received the correspondence from the Northumberland trading standards officers, and added: "Therefore I am not able to say why it was not responded to."

He stressed that hundreds of letters went to his department every year, of which he saw some but by no means all, adding: "It may very well be that they want more money.

"They won't be the first local authority to say that they want more money. They seek to portray the argument in various ways."

Foster quotes Michael Serres's claim "that one can read from the work of art to its conditions, but not — or not entirely — from the conditions to the work of art". What he supplies are the conditions.
Seamus Deane on Roy Foster's biography of W B Yeats

Books G2 page 8

IS YOUR HAIR THINNER THAN IT WAS A FEW YEARS AGO?

In a recent survey of 500 women, a staggering 33% reported hair loss.

One of the reasons for hair loss in women is nutritional.
10 years's research has now produced an effective supplement: it's called NutriHair®

In a recent survey 33% of women stated they had experienced hair loss in recent years, and that this caused them distress and anxiety. It is perfectly natural to lose some hair every day. But if you feel your hair loss is increasing or you have less hair than you used to, then NutriHair® could be of real help.

"I have about a third less hair than I used to have. Nobody believes I have a problem because I still have a lot of hair but I know its has changed and I am very worried".

NutriHair® could be for you if you can answer yes to any of these questions

1. Do you have less hair than you used to?
2. Does more hair fall out when you shampoo, brush or comb your hair?
3. Is there less hair in your ponytail or the amount you can clip back?

The facts about hair growth

Hair growth is cyclical. Each hair grows for up to 3 years and is then shed. Its follicle rests for about 12 weeks and then starts growing a new hair. It is normal to lose between 50-150 hairs per day.

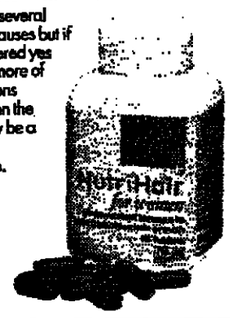
But, if the three year growth stage shortens, even just a little, there will be an increase in hair shedding. If this continues for several months the amount of hair will become noticeably less.

The warning signs: more hair in the brush, less hair in the ponytail

If you are losing more hair than you once were it is usually obvious when washing, brushing or styling your hair.

Causes of increased hair loss

There are several possible causes but if you answered yes to one or more of the questions above, then the cause may be a nutritional imbalance.



This increases hair shedding by affecting the hair growth cycle. NutriHair® has been developed by one of Britain's leading hair specialists and is based on 10 years careful analysis involving hundreds of women. The studies show that the unique combination of ingredients in NutriHair® could make a real difference to the amount of hair you grow.

In trial conditions women using NutriHair® noticed some reduction in hair loss three to four months after starting the supplement. It can take up to 6 months to see the full benefit.

Your first month's supply is free

For the quickest results three tablets should be taken daily for the first three months. After that, just one tablet daily should help maintain maximum hair volume. The special introductory offer price of £29.90 - three packs for the price of two - gives you enough NutriHair® for three months. Then one pack at £14.95 will last you three months.

Your money-back guarantee

NutriHair® is a highly reputable product only available from Nature's Best. Should you complete the 3 month course and notice no benefit we will refund your money in full. However, it is stressed that the full benefits of NutriHair® are only seen at 6 months. No other company offers you such a guarantee for a hair product. It is based on the confidence we have in NutriHair®.

Any questions?

Our Nutrition Advisors will be happy to answer any questions you may have about NutriHair®. Please call 01892 552118 between 9am - 5.30pm, Monday to Friday.

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Judge sorry for racist remark

Christopher Elliott

A JUDGE last night apologised for using the word "niggers" in court during a social security benefits fraud trial.

Judge William Crawford QC, made the remark to defence counsel during the trial at Newcastle crown court last Friday of Pamela Richardson, who had pleaded guilty to five counts involving social security fraud.

Judge Crawford, aged 60, said: "I often wonder why doctors sign sick notes with such ready alacrity. I mean these sick notes state that you should "refrain from work for 12 months because of a duodenal ulcer".

He added: "Why, I know many people with duodenal ulcers who work like niggers."

Mohan Das, a bystander in the court, lodged a complaint with court staff and asked for a transcript of the case, in which Ms Richardson was given a community service order. Mr Das, who said he was offended by the judge's comments, added: "When I challenged people about what he had said they told me I must be mistaken and that he had used the word 'minger', which they said was a local word for a scruffy person. But I knew I was right and asked for the recording of his words to be played back when I made my complaint.

"Newcastle is said to be one the least racist places. It has a big Asian population and how can any of them appear before him knowing he uses words like that? He should be removed from the bench."

Judge Crawford, who is married with three children, was in trouble four years ago when he was rebuked by Lord Mackay, the Lord Chancellor, for being over-familiar with female court staff. One woman said he kissed her on both cheeks and touched her waist.

Once again the judge, a Wykehamist and graduate of Emmanual College, Cambridge, apologised.

His latest apology came in a statement from the Lord Chancellor's department last night.

"I wish to apologise for my use of those words in court last Friday. I intended no slur against anyone, as the context makes clear. I much regret if my inadvertent use of this expression has caused offence."

Organisations call for talks with ministers over plans to privatise services for elderly and disabled

Government puts its faith in charity

Voluntary sector subsidising care

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

MOST charities providing social care under contracts with local authorities say they are having to subsidise the services from fundraising income, a survey yesterday showed.

The findings came as the Government published a white paper proposing that all services for elderly and disabled people be privatised by handing them over to the voluntary and private sectors.

The white paper, which would be legislated upon if the Conservatives were re-elected, also sets out plans to require social services departments to share responsibility for children's services with other agencies; to improve the training of social workers involved in child care; and to introduce a new system for regulating social care.

Stephen Dorrell, Health Secretary, described the proposals as "the biggest changes in the structure and delivery of social services since social services departments were created in 1971".

However, the National Council for Voluntary Organisations last night called for urgent talks with ministers. It said a survey of charities, due out in May, suggested the voluntary sector was unhappy. Of 115 charities providing care services, 69 per cent said they were having to dip into their own funds to top up what they were paid to run them, while 54 per cent said they were being expected to accept additional tasks.

Stuart Etherington, NCVO chief executive, warned: "If the Government is proposing a major change in the way social services are delivered, this should not be done on the assumption that the voluntary sector will subsidise such changes."

The white paper represents the third front of the Tories' welfare offensive, following last week's plans to replace the state pension and the bill, published on Monday, to encourage people to buy insurance for long-term care.

Labour declared the white paper long on rhetoric but short on substance. Mr Dorrell admitted he had decided against extending the contracting-out proposals to children's services.

The charity Age Concern said it remained unconvinced that local authority services were more expensive than the private sector — the ostensible reason for the privatisation plan — and the Association for Residential Care said it feared some authorities would interpret value-for-money as "the cheapest service they can find".

However, Barry Hassell, chief executive of the Independent Healthcare Association, said: "Consumers are being liberated from the old, monopoly-provider regime."

Leader comment, page 8

The elderly would no longer be the state's responsibility under the latest proposals — the third prong of the Tories' welfare offensive — but overstretched charities are unhappy

Social services to lose provider role

LOCAL government social services is in danger of becoming a £10 billion business immune to proper scrutiny and isolated from the values of society as a whole, according to the white paper on the sector's future, *writes David Brindle.*

The 39-page blueprint says the direction for the next 25 years of social services departments, which celebrated their silver jubilee last year, should be commissioning social care, not providing it or regulating it.

The white paper asserts that "the very large majority" of people rightly provide social care for themselves, or have it provided by family, friends and neighbours. "The role of statutory social services is to act as support to those who are meeting social care needs in these ways, and as a commissioner of care to support those for whom these networks fail."

Spending on social services has risen four-fold in real terms since 1971/72, totalling more than £8.4 billion in 1996/97.

Although the white paper acknowledges that "much is done to high standards" by social services departments, it says there is inadequate transparency about how such large sums of money are spent.

It argues that departments are "not well-suited" to be direct providers of services. There is clear evidence that private and voluntary sector providers offer better value for money, it claims. "The Government therefore wishes to entrench the trend towards more external supply of residential and home care."

Residential care — It is proposed to qualify local authorities' power to provide residential care for adults, stipulating they may do so only if they can still prove a need after a rigorous and objective review of independent-sector alternatives.

"The need to retain directly-managed residential homes is likely to become increasingly rare," ministers say.

Formal and open reviews of direct provision would be required periodically, with costings made public. This would include exposure of arrangements made by some authorities to have homes run by arms-length trusts.

Such trusts would have to appear in an authority's direct-service accounts, unless it could demonstrate it had no interest in the assets and carried no risk.

Domiciliary care — The same arrangements would apply to care provided in elderly and disabled people's own homes, as well as to day centres.

Domiciliary services, currently unregulated, would be made subject to the same registration and inspection requirements as care homes.

Children's services — Local authorities would not be forced to test their direct children's services against the independent sector in the same way. However, ministers want the planning — and possibly the commissioning — of such services broadened beyond social services departments. It is proposed to widen the statutory framework for children's services plans, required by the Children Act, to draw in other council departments and health and probation authorities.

Although no change is put forward, the Government is said to stand ready to amend the Children Act, if necessary, to "reassert a proper balance between the rights of the individual child and the responsibilities of parents and other adults".

The white paper further proposes to improve the training of social care staff who work with children. As a long-term goal, all such staff should have a post-basic qualification in child care.

Regulation — Responsibility for registration and inspection of all care homes and services should be switched to new statutory bodies. Social services departments would lose the role of regulating residential homes, and health authorities that of regulating nursing homes.

Social Services — Achievement and Challenge; Stationery Office; £6.85.

'No reason' to insist on in-house services

Alison Daniels on how the free market theory works in practice in Wandsworth

WHEN it comes to social services provision, the Tory-controlled, multi-ethnic, mixed income borough of Wandsworth in south London has adopted something of pick'n'mix approach.

Its six children's homes are run by a charity, Shaftesbury Homes and Arethusa, while its old people's homes are run by a number of housing associations and a private sector health care company.

Wandsworth's day care centres and luncheon clubs are run by local voluntary groups, its meals on wheels by an outside contractor since 1994, and its home care services by the council, after fighting off outside bids in 1995.

Wandsworth's 265,000 residents, of whom 8 per cent are unemployed and 16 per cent are pensioners, can rest assured that the local authority has, since turning Tory in 1979, zealously pursued the value-for-money creed.

In the words of its social services director, Mike Rundle: "There is no overriding reason why services should be provided in-house if they can be provided just as well by outside providers. What's important is that they meet good standards at a good price."

Take the elderly. In the past, Wandsworth had 10 local authority homes. Three have been closed, four are run by housing associations, and the other three were sold in November to a private company, CrestCare plc, a UK-wide health care company which last year recorded pre-tax profits of £5.3 million.

Wandsworth was challenged unsuccessfully in the courts over its plans to dispense of all residential care facilities to outside agencies.

The most recent sale of old people's homes has saved the council £489,000 a year.

CrestaCare's chief executive, Magdy Ishak, is adamant that the quality of residents' meals and transport has improved, while nearly nearly £750,000 is being spent on upgrading two homes.

In light of the Government's plans to turn social services departments into purchasers rather than providers, Mr Rundle points out that when it comes to the elderly a significant proportion are already being cared for in non-council homes.

Bond is museum's secret weapon

Royal Armouries hope visitors will be shaken and stirred by 007, **Martin Wainwright** reports

BRITAIN'S main research centre on arms and armour is to defy critics who allege "dumbing down" in the museum world by staging a summer of James Bond gadgetry and medieval gore.

The new Royal Armouries in Leeds, which has faced sniping from London since its £43 million move north last year, is to present an exhibition of 007 weapons, cars and "Bond babes" alongside its scholarly collection of European and Oriental military equipment.

The strategy is expected to increase attendance at the museum, which has seen 450,000 visitors in its first year — the lower end of market research predictions and well below initial forecasts of a million.

Although the museum is thriving, with healthy corporate business and a far greater appeal to British visitors than the collection had in its old home, the Tower of London, staff are under some pressure to push figures up.

"Some people are going to criticise the James Bond idea," said Guy Wilson, Master of the Armouries, yesterday. "But we are aiming at a wider audience. A museum like this must offer some very serious things, some popular things, and a lot of material which comes somewhere in the middle."

The Bond film exhibits, including Rosa Klebb's deadly shoe (From Russia with Love), 007's fabled Aston Martin (Goldfinger) and Jaws' steel teeth (The Spy Who Loved Me), will be joined by scholarly but turnstile-spinning material in a series of summer exhibitions. An examination of Agincourt will include the suggestion that Henry V ordered the cutting of 200 French noblemen's throats, while another display concentrates on Britain's bloodiest-ever battle, at Towton, near Leeds, in 1461.

"Contemporary accounts vary, but we can be pretty sure that Towton saw more people die than on any other day in British history, apart from the first day of the Somme," said John Waller, who directs the Armouries' live displays of fighting with swords, poleaxes and other weapons. The skulls of four Towton victims go on display from this weekend, along with examples of the arrows, billhooks and spears which left neat holes in the bone.

Forensic archaeologists at Bradford university have also found evidence from the remains which suggests that some of the estimated 30,000 dead were victims of the sort of nastiness endlessly tackled by James Bond. Sword cuts suggest that ears and other body parts may have been sliced off after death.

"You could perhaps call it overkill," said Mr Waller, whose previous work has included advising on Monty Python and the Holy Grail.

The Armouries will tackle the attraction of the macabre in a further exhibition in the autumn on Torment and Tourism, using the Tower's collection of torture and punishment equipment. The museum will combine the horrors of the past with modern equivalents in its Newsroom Gallery, using film, photography and manuscripts on the theme of torture in the modern world.

"We have inscriptions left on walls in the Tower by prisoners and we intend to compare these with modern letters from Death Row in the United States," said Mr Wilson. "The exhibition will consider why these ghoulish things are so popular."

The programme will be monitored to test the Armouries' belief that popular "tempters", including a virtual reality shooting game based on the Winchester rifle, can introduce a wider public to the core collection.

Mr Wilson said: "An exhibition like the Bond one is naturally fun, but it must have some sort of relevance for us to accept it. It will play a part in illustrating the development of weapons and gadgetry. But one of Bond's great attractions is that he will appeal to a public beyond those who regularly visit museums."

A skull from one of the victims of the 1461 battle of Towton. PHOTOGRAPH: CHRIS THOMOND

Dodging the dinosaur label

MUSEUMS desperate to avoid the "dingy places with different kind of bits" jibe of a recent report include:

- Imperial War Museum, London: Forties Fashion and the New Look — a celebration of Dior's 1947 collection. The museum pioneered theme-park style installations, with The Blitz Experience.
- Victoria and Albert Museum, London: Cutting Edge — 50 years of British fashion, sponsored by Mulberry, frocks new and old, CD of specially composed music on sale in gift shop.
- Science Museum, London: Science of Sport, opens March 29. Exhaustive and exhaustingly interractive, treadmills, virtual volleyball, sprint against the champions, measure tennis serve speed — "It's going to be fab", a museum spokeswoman said.
- Natural History Museum, 1990: Return of the Living Dinosaurs. Queues around the South Kensington block for its temporary exhibition of all-moving all-snarling robotic dinosaurs.
- Natural History Museum: Earthquake! Star attraction in its new £12 million earth science galleries; visitors stand in a shuddering life-size recreation of a Japanese supermarket in the grip of the 1995 Kobe earthquake.
- City Arts Centre, Edinburgh, and touring: Music 100, EMI-sponsored 100 years of recorded music, Gilbert and Sullivan to Britpop, with heavy marketing emphasis on the latter.
- Preston, Carlisle and Sheffield: virtual football league. The three are engaged in a penalty shoot to house a national football museum.
- Non-starters: Bikers! An exhibition on custom motor-bikes at Birmingham flopped; the studded-jacket brigade scorched off to their own circuit of shows where you can see the bikes and buy a drink.

Nursery challenge over class sizes

Sarah Boseley

A PRIVATE nursery in Norfolk is to challenge the Government in the High Court for allowing schools to put four-year-old children into reception classes with as many as 30 children to one adult, when the private nursery sector is restricted to no more than eight to one.

William Dickinson, managing director of Rainbow Daycare, in North Walsham, is accusing the Government of dual standards. Local education authorities use the Children Act to impose rigorous standards on private nurseries — for the sake of the children who, it is recognised, do not prosper in large classes.

Yet in the effort to mop up nursery vouchers, he says, schools are doing their utmost to lure those children into school reception classes where there are no rules governing the ratio of adults to children.

"We need to get the issue out in the open," said Mr Dickinson yesterday. "It has gone on for far too long."

Vouchers were supposed to encourage more nursery school provision, but were having the opposite effect as schools took in ever-younger children. Rainbow Daycare had 120 children last year. This year, it has 46.

Mr Dickinson's first step is to challenge Norfolk county council's regulations. He has asked to be allowed to take in 13 children instead of eight, per adult. When, he predicts, this is refused, he will challenge the authority in the High Court on the basis that its schools should abide by the Children Act.

Margaret Lochrie, chief executive of the Pre-School Learning Alliance, said yesterday: "We have a great deal of sympathy for him. His frustrations are similar to those being experienced by a lot of voluntary and private sector providers."

She thought it was wrong to have two different sets of standards. The battle for the income from vouchers was leading to children who might not be capable of dressing themselves or going to the toilet being placed in mixed classes with five- and six-year-olds, supervised by perhaps one adult to 20 or 30 children.

A Department for Education spokesman told Nursery World magazine, which has expressed great concern over the expanding reception clases, that "it is neither appropriate nor necessary" to ask maintained schools with nursery or reception classes to register under the Children Act, because they provided education, rather than primarily care.

'International' BA may jack in its Union Flag logo

Gary Younge

IT is a Euro-sceptic's nightmare. A major British company cocking a public snook at a sacred national symbol in the interests of commerce sans frontières. In the interests of international business, British Airways has dropped its commitment to fly the flag.

The stylised Union Jack — the centrepiece of British Airways' aircraft livery since the 1970s — could be axed as part of a new corporate identity designed to give the company a more "global" feel, it emerged yesterday.

Sixty per cent of BA's business is now with overseas customers. "The aviation market has changed out of all recognition since the last redesign, a BA spokeswoman said.

The new design is expected later this year.

Satellites at risk from space debris

Tim Radford, Science Editor

MORE than 200 space experts will converge on a small town in Germany next weekend to discuss the traffic pile-up nobody expected — in orbit round the Earth.

The conference, which opens at the European Space Agency's Darmstadt operations centre on Monday is sponsored by British, French, German and Italian space agencies all worried about the world's nastiest accident — a direct hit at 20,000mph.

In the 40 years since Sputnik I, the high frontier has become a free-fall junkyard. More than 3,750 launches have put 23,000 objects into space, of which more than 7,500 are still there.

What goes up need not come down. Objects higher than 400 miles tend to stay there.

US scientists are tracking more than 8,500 objects bigger than a man's hand. But the bits of hardware splintered to millimetre-sized fragments could have reached 17 million. Every one is orbiting at over five miles a second, packing more punch than a high-velocity bullet.

"There is a thing called cascading, which it has been suggested will happen in the next 20 to 50 years. A satellite, if it is hit by debris, will break into 1,000 bits each of those capable of going on to hit other satellites," says Dr Richard Crowther, of the Defence Evaluation and Research Agency at Farnborough.

There have already been a number of direct hits.

هكذا من الأصل

Combat 18 three jailed on race hate charges

Anti-Fascist campaigners hit out at 'far too lenient sentences'

Stuart Millar

THREE members of the violent neo-Nazi group Combat 18 were jailed yesterday amid bitter complaints from anti-Fascist campaigners that they had been treated far too leniently.

The men, who cannot be named for legal reasons, pleaded guilty at the Old Bailey to possessing "threatening, abusive or insulting" material which was intended to stir up racial hatred.

Two of the defendants were aged 35 and 36 and from Essex, while the third was aged 26, from south London.

Sentencing two to 17 months and the third to 12 months imprisonment, Judge Henry Pownall, QC, told them: "Nobody, least of all this court, would deny your right to freedom of speech ... But as with all freedoms, responsibilities go with them. The freedom is to speak as you wish and even as strongly as you wish; the responsibility is to do that within the law and without being threatening, abusive or insulting."

He said issue three of the Combat 18 magazine and compact discs found in the men's possession broke this rule.

But there was anger last night among anti-Fascist campaigners who had hoped longer sentences would effectively destroy the operation of Combat 18.

They said the extreme nature of the material, which included bomb-making instructions and hit lists, as well as overtly racist literature, should have warranted more severe punishment.

Gerry Gable, veteran editor of Searchlight magazine, said: "It's depressing to see such short sentences being handed down in cases that involved the publication of hit lists alongside instructions on how to construct bombs. In an atmosphere that is calling for the courts to get tough with serious and violent criminals, this has not exactly acted as a deterrent."

Since it was formed as a hardline splinter group from the extreme right British National Party in 1992, C18 — named after the numerical position of Adolf Hitler's initials in the alphabet — achieved notoriety as it waged a violent campaign of intimidation against opponents.

It was behind a parcel bomb campaign in January which targeted sports personalities in mixed race marriages, and far right organisations, but observers had hoped it was set to tear itself apart as members became embroiled in a vicious internal feud in the run-up to the trial.

The court heard that C18 was reluctant to reveal the details of its members.

Orlando Powell, prosecuting, read the bomb-making instructions published in the C18 magazine, which he described as a "fairly glossy and well-prepared publication".

He told the judge: "The instructions contained are accurate and would provide the reader with sufficient information to manufacture a detonator and bombs."

It also included details of the group's aims, one of which was to "ship all non-whites back to Africa, Asia, Arabia, alive or in body bags, the choice is theirs".

Another was to "execute all Jews who have actively helped to damage the white race and to put into camps the rest until we find a solution for the eternal Jew".

One of the Combat 18 accused (centre) with supporters outside the Old Bailey before sentence PHOTOGRAPH: MARK ST GEORGE

News in brief

Evening Standard to face contempt case

SIR Nicholas Lyell, the Attorney General, announced yesterday that he is to bring contempt proceedings against London's Evening Standard. The move follows the publication of an article which caused the abandonment of the Whitemoor prison IRA escape trial.

Max Hastings, the newspaper's editor, has already unreservedly apologised to the trial judge for the error.

Sir Nicholas has to make an application to the divisional court before contempt proceedings can be launched.

The article, Alcatraz on Thames, was published in the Standard on January 22, outlining conditions in Belmarsh prison, south London, and identifying three of the defendants in the Whitemoor trial as convicted IRA terrorists, in contravention of an order by the judge.

Five IRA prisoners and an armed robber were appearing at Woolwich crown court, accused of breaking out of the top security prison in Cambridgeshire. Defence lawyers argued successfully that the article had made a fair trial impossible and the proceedings were stayed. — *Andrew Culf*

Singer set for new court date

MUSICIAN Chrissie Hynde is to appear in court this month after being arrested for allegedly carrying a martial arts knife as she tried to board a plane. She was stopped by security staff at Heathrow airport on her way to catch a flight, said Scotland Yard.

The 45-year-old American, whose band the Pretenders had hits with Stop Your Sobbing and Back on the Chain Gang, was arrested on November 15. She was charged with possessing a "butterfly knife" contrary to aviation law, said a Yard spokesman. She pleaded not guilty when she first appeared at Uxbridge magistrates court, west London, on December 20.

Body in woods is Zoe

THE body of a schoolgirl found in a wood was yesterday identified as that of missing Zoe Evans, aged nine. Forensic experts had been carrying out tests on remains recovered less than a mile from her home in Warminster, Wiltshire, two weeks ago.

Her stepfather, Miles Evans, aged 23, an army driver, was charged with murder before the discovery of her body on February 26. He appeared before West Wiltshire magistrates court yesterday and was remanded in custody until April 9.

Labour peer dies

THE Earl of Listowel, who was Secretary of State for India in Clement Attlee's post-war Labour government, died at his London home yesterday, aged 90. Lord Listowel, who succeeded to the title in 1931, held a variety of government posts both during and after the war. Throughout his career he took a keen interest in constitutional developments within the Commonwealth.

Four girls die in car crash

Martin Wainwright

FOUR girls from one of the country's top-rated comprehensive schools were killed yesterday when their car left a narrow country lane, hit a tree and exploded in flames.

The accident happened at lunchtime when the driver, a sixth former at Harrogate grammar school, apparently lost control on the little-used lane near Norwood Edge, North Yorkshire.

Emergency crews only realised the extent of the tragedy after the burning red Peugeot 106 had been doused and the bodies were found inside. Police were still trying to contact two sets of parents last night and no names of the victims were released.

The school was in shock after the news spread through the town and outlying villages on the eastern rim of the Yorkshire Dales.

North Yorkshire police said the Peugeot was the only vehicle involved in the crash. Paramedics answered an emergency call to the remote spot, three miles from the village of Beckwithshaw, but a spokesman for North Yorkshire ambulance service said: "There was nothing that could be done."

Formal identification is expected to take several days because of the effects of the blaze, which destroyed the car in spite of the emergency services' prompt response. The first fire crew was at the scene within minutes but the car was already wrecked. Paramedics were withdrawn soon after arriving, handing over to a police forensic team.

A spokesman at Harrogate grammar said last night the school would not make a comment until families had all been fully informed.

The school has consistently performed highly in national league tables and is one of the flagships of North Yorkshire's education authority.

Ripper loses one eye after Broadmoor stab attack

Lawrence Donegan

PETER SUTCLIFFE, the Yorkshire Ripper, has permanently lost his sight in one eye after being attacked by a fellow patient at Broadmoor, it emerged yesterday.

Sutcliffe, who is serving life for murdering 13 women, underwent further hospital treatment after being stabbed in the eyes with a fibre-tipped pen but doctors were unable to save his left eye. Hospital sources said it was "quite possible" he could lose the sight of his right eye as well.

The 50-year-old multiple murderer was rushed to Frimley Park hospital, near Camberley, on Tuesday after he was attacked in his room at Broadmoor's Henley ward by Ian Kay, who was jailed for life in 1995 for killing a trainee manager at Woolworths.

NICK NOLTE

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The Guardian Thursday March 13 1997

Albania sinks deeper into anarchy

Helena Smith in Tirana reports on the war of nerves in the capital as the mayor appeals for calm and armed rebel gangs move closer

PARTY leaders in Tirana appealed for calm yesterday as the tide of anarchy gripping much of Albania seeped into the country's nervous capital.

Gangs apparently supporting the embattled president, Sali Berisha, took guns from Tirana's abandoned military academy. Police watched as the men walked out with AK-47 automatic weapons slung over their shoulders.

State television interrupted programmes to broadcast an appeal read by Tirana's mayor, Albert Brojka, on behalf of the main parties. "We call on the people of the capital to keep cool heads, to protect their city from any kind of provocation and rumour," he said.

The armed rebels who control most of southern and central Albania formed a national committee for public salvation, but it was unclear

how much control it exerts over swathes of territory patrolled by armed gangs and bandits.

Army troops have melted away or defected to the rebel cause, and civilians have helped themselves to weapons from deserted military bases, either to further the revolt against President Berisha, or simply to defend themselves.

The new prime minister, Bashkim Fino, called for talks with the rebels, who are demanding President Berisha's resignation following the collapse of a string of investment schemes. His opponents accuse the president of failing to curb the schemes, and even profiting from them to boost his Democratic Party.

"This is not a time to issue orders on either side. It is a time for dialogue," Mr Fino told state television.

Mr Fino has enraged the rebels by saying Mr Berisha should remain in power. The future of his government was in doubt yesterday, when the opposition Democratic Alliance walked out of talks on the formation of a cabinet.

Italy and Greece urged the government to meet the rebels. A European mediation mission led by former Austrian chancellor Franz Vranitzky is expected to return to Tirana today.

More than 40 people have died and scores have been injured as demonstrations escalated into violence that has spread towards Tirana.

Each day more and more towns and destitute villages are falling out of government control. Yesterday the revolt crept further towards the capital as rampaging locals raided yet another armed depot near the central town of Elbasan.

Alarming quantities of military hardware, arms and ammunition are now in the hands of the protesters, some of whom are as young as 10. More than 200,000 assault rifles have been seized by a mob that often has no idea how to use them.

Western diplomatic missions in Tirana say the seizure of the weapons is a big factor in the decision to evacuate non-essential staff. Last night, the United States joined Britain, Italy, France and Germany in urging its citizens to leave.

The protesters appear determined to hang on to their looted weapons, which they see as a useful bargaining chip in forthcoming discussions with the coalition government.

Additional reporting by Reuter.

A boy in army uniform burns a fuse looted from an arsenal in Delvine, southern Albania PHOTOGRAPH: YANNIS BEHRAKIS

Joanna Robertson in Vlore on the hunting down and beating up of the hated Shik secret police in a town largely in the hands of criminals and louts

THE young man lying on a pile of old coats on a filthy makeshift bed in Vlore hospital said: "I'm scared to death. I want to leave." Miles from his home town of Lezhe in northern Albania, he was bony and badly bruised, with bloodshot eyes.

"I'm a member of the Shik, that's the only name you need to know," he said.

The terrified man claimed he was beaten up and shot during the fighting almost two weeks ago that destroyed the Shik headquarters. He said he knew he could not survive unless he escaped the town.

Vlore is obsessed with the Shik, the secret police who still terrorise the country. In Vlore, they are accused of killings in the dead of night, and are reported to roam the streets with a list of people to assassinate.

General Skender Sera, head of Vlore's rebel military committee, claims to have "arrested" at least 10 Shik members in the past three days. "The Shik are the only force [President Salij Berisha now has against us. We are concentrating all our efforts on seeking them out."

Shik suspects are held in isolation and interrogated into "confessing". As one man was dragged off for questioning, his burly guard said: "He'll only be released if he truly repents." A few hours later, the suspect was in Vlore's hospital. He died from his injuries.

For all its new local political and military committees, Vlore is largely in the hands of criminals. The roadblocks every 300 yards are manned by gun-brandishing, often drunk, louts. The streets are deserted, as inhabitants lock themselves in their homes.

Rozata, aged 17, has not been out of the house for two weeks. "There are so many guns in the streets and anything could happen," she said.

The food supply is running low, and the family are living off pasta and roots collected in the daily morning forage for food. Rozata would like to escape to Italy, as some of her friends have done, taken by Mafia speedboat to the shores of Puglia. But she does not have £500 for the passage. "We don't have the money for bread, let alone for Italy."

A derelict kindergarten building lies in the shadow of Rozata's tatty block of flats. It is barred up and crumbling. Vasilika Ruc reaches through the iron bars, taking a piece of bread for her three-year-

> 'By the end of the week they'll be killing each other, and they deserve it'

old boy from a neighbour. She is heavily pregnant.

Vasilika said she lost her savings in the collapsed Gjallica investment scheme. She had hoped to make enough to rent a a flat for herself and her husband, who spent 15 years in prison under the dictator Enver Hoxha. "I am not moving from this place. I am terrified of all the guns and the men I do not recognise on the streets. But my husband is armed and will kill anyone who tries to take us out of here."

At the Valonja Hotel, built on drug money and run by the man behind illegal immigrant smuggling in Vlore, the barman, Elidin Duro, was very unhappy. He has no faith in Albert Shyti, head of Vlore's committee, and a regular in the bar. "I cannot look into his eyes, because they are the eyes of a criminal," Elidin said. "By the end of the week they will be killing each other in this town, and they will deserve it."

Communists set for rehabilitation

Gregor Gysi (right) has reinvented the former ruling party of East Germany and is confident of overcoming public distrust to secure a role in regional government, writes **Victoria Brittain**

THE former East German communist party will be back in power in coalition with the Social Democrats (SPD) in regional governments before the end of the century, the party's chairman, Gregor Gysi, has predicted on a visit to London.

Mr Gysi's Party of Democratic Socialism (PDS) is still regarded as a pariah in public life, but with up to a quarter of the vote in some east German *Länder* — and 36 per cent in east Berlin — the ex-communist lawyer says the Social Democrats must overcome suspicion of the PDS if they want to avoid alliances with their conservative opponents.

Along the way to the political mainstream, Mr Gysi has had to fight off accusations of links with the old state security apparatus, the Stasi.

Now he is struggling to change the image of the PDS in western Germany, where its vote is still tiny. "We have to fight irrational anti-communism and convey to people in the west that their problems are ours," he said at the weekend.

The 120,000 PDS members, overwhelmingly from the east, also need to make "a cultural leap" away from seeing themselves as second-class citizens, Mr Gysi said. He believes it will take a generation for attitudes to change enough for the PDS to become a genuinely national party and a home for German socialists of all hues. Earlier this year, he saw off a challenge from the party's minority communist wing, and he is anxious to distance it from "our discredited past".

Mr Gysi's family experiences make him something of an expert on political mood swings. His aunt is the novelist Doris Lessing, a well-known anti-communist once married to his Jewish mother's brother, Gottfried Lessing, the first leader of the Communist Party of Rhodesia during the Nazi period.

"Anti-communism is her hobby horse," he said. "Of course, she's really only talking about Stalinism, but still, we don't have to talk about politics together, we can talk about psychology instead." After the Berlin Wall came down in 1989 there was a family reunion in London.

In recent weeks, PDS supporters have found themselves involved in violent clashes with neo-Nazis. After the PDS mayor in Mr Gysi's constituency in Berlin banned a far-right demonstration, neo-Nazis and PDS supporters fought pitched battles. A neo-Nazi shot a PDS worker in the party's bookshop.

Mr Gysi believes the neo-Nazis will continue to grow in both eastern and western Germany. "The power base of rightwing extremism is the fear of unemployment," he said. And although the PDS is not opposed to further European integration, it has criticised the Maastricht treaty's terms for a single currency. Mr Gysi points to the huge economic and social costs of German currency union in 1990 as an example of what could happen all over Europe.

Meanwhile, he rules out a role in a national coalition. But a possible pointer for the future can be found in the PDS's arm's-length support for the SPD-Green administration in the state of Saxony-Anhalt, where the PDS has 20 per cent of the vote against the Greens' 5 per cent.

Mr Gysi believes such tacit arrangements will have to be formalised after the 1998 elections, although relations with the Social Democrats remain difficult.

"Talks with the SPD are very emotional, but we have to keep talking. It would be unrealistic for us to hope for social reforms in Germany without the SPD, and for them the realisation has dawned that we are the only alternative to working with the Christian Democrats."

Fraud robs EU coffers of billions

John Palmer in Strasbourg

FRAUD that exploits loopholes in VAT and customs duties in the single European market and cigarette smuggling could be costing the European Union and national governments more than £10 billion a year, according to a two-year investigation by the European Parliament published yesterday.

A lorry driver collecting milk powder from a warehouse in Kent, for example, was told it was part of food aid destined for the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia and would, therefore, be exempt from VAT. But when he arrived in Athens, the driver was told to hand over the load to a group of men acting for

> 'We are talking about a Victorian world of paper and rubber stamps'

his employers. He realised that a forged customs stamp, indicating that the food had already left the EU, had been obtained but that the consignment was destined for sale in local markets. The tax fraud was detected and a group of British and Greek businessmen were convicted and imprisoned.

Despite the occasional success of the authorities in spotting abuse of the European single market rules which exempt goods in transit to third countries from customs duties, excises and VAT, the fraudsters still have the upper hand. The European Parliament investigation reveals not only the huge loss of revenue to the EU and its member states, but also the ambiguous role of the tobacco multinationals.

"I am convinced the diversion of tax revenue from national budgets and the European Union budget is at least £10 billion a year — but I would not be surprised if it was very much more," John Tomlinson, the Labour MEP who chaired the European Parliament inquiry into transit fraud, said in Strasbourg yesterday.

"We are not asking national governments to act to halt this scandal, we are demanding that they do so," he said. "The European Union budget and national government budgets are being defrauded of revenue which is badly needed. But until now some national governments appear not to have understood what is going on. We need much closer co-operation between customs authorities and perhaps eventually a common European customs service."

The 100-page report shows how the creation of a single European market 10 years ago was not accompanied by an effective, cross-border system for monitoring transit fraud. The inquiry also reveals that some transit and smuggling fraud appears to be conducted under the nose of the mainly American multinational tobacco companies.

"We sought testimony from the tobacco multinationals. Some were willing to talk, but Philip Morris wanted part of their testimony kept confidential. I cannot say we were convinced by all the companies told us," Mr Tomlinson said.

The report makes clear that fraud scam involves large-scale international criminal organisations. "Every container of cigarettes that vanishes without trace due to forgery and corruption costs us £800,000 in lost revenue," said James Kellett-Bowman, Conservative MEP and member of the inquiry.

The main problem is that the existing system of checks is totally inadequate for what has been an explosive growth in single market trade and the sophistication of the cigarette and other fraudsters. "We are talking about a Victorian world of paper and a myriad customs rubber stamps," Mr Tomlinson said.

Drivers face ban in polluted Paris

Alex Duval Smith in Paris

CARS with odd-numbered registration plates may be banned from the streets of Paris today amid high pollution levels caused by sunny weather.

Following the lead of other European capitals, the environment minister, Corinne Lepage, said that if at 6am today nitrogen dioxide rates approach danger levels, radio stations will announce the 24-hour restriction. Today being the 13th, the ban will apply to odd-numbered cars.

Environmentalists predicted that drivers would ignore the ban since, initially, they face only a verbal warning if they breach it. Fines will be introduced later.

The Greens called instead on Mrs Lepage to bring in more environmentally friendly public transport, such as trams. They said alternate-number traffic controls which have been in force in Rome and Athens for up to 15 years have failed.

But the emergency ruling invoked by the government yesterday — made possible by a legal provision passed by parliament last autumn — marks a symbolic step for politicians who have always been afraid to take on motorists.

Earlier this week, poor air quality prompted Paris to introduce speed restrictions and free residents' parking. The mayor, Jean Tiberi, has said public transport will be free on days when cars are banned.

Mrs Lepage, who expects the ban to be enforced on fewer than five days a year, said it would not apply to commercial traffic, coaches, public transport or taxis. She said: "We are hoping this will be an educational process. The ban will not affect electric cars nor those carrying

> 'The ban will not affect electric cars or those carrying three people'

three people or more. Ultimately, we intend it to be based on the environmental-friendliness of each vehicle."

In Paris yesterday, in warm sunshine under cloudless skies, the Airparif authority said readings from 15 sites indicated continued poor air quality. Cars would be banned if nitrogen dioxide levels approached 400 microgrammes per cubic metre and ozone and sulphur dioxide levels 360 mg and 600 mg respectively.

Iran tops up funds as Shah's cars go under the hammer

Owen Bennett-Jones in Geneva

TEN cars once owned by the late Shah of Iran were sold in Geneva yesterday for £450,000 — considerably higher than the auctioneer's estimate of £350,000.

The star of the show was a 1971 Lamborgini Muira SVJ, sold to an American for £279,000 after a tussle between bidders from the UK and the US.

"There are only four in the world and it has only done 2,000 miles," said the auctioneer, Robert Brooks.

As the cars went up for auction, the sale room was crammed with a strange mix of potential buyers. Tweed-suited British collectors sat next to young Russian "businessmen" with their mobile phones and bejewelled, fur-coated girlfriends.

The cars auctioned were just part of the Shah's 3,000-strong collection.

When the Islamic government took over in 1979 most of the cars in the imperial garage were pressed into government service. The cars were sold in the early 1990s to a private collector from the United Arab Emirates, and have been in storage ever since.

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Budget 'disgrace' neglects growing underclass

Cash squeeze hits Hong Kong's poor

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

THREE months from Chinese rule, Hong Kong was yesterday given a last colonial budget, its coffers bulging with surplus cash but its distaste for the welfare state undented by a widening gulf between the affluent and an impoverished underclass.

Britain's last big colony will revert to Chinese rule on July 1 with £28 billion in reserves, an inheritance that Governor Chris Patten has called the "biggest dowry since Cleopatra". Post-colonial Hong Kong — to be known as a Special Administrative Region (SAR) of China — will also take over a "land fund" containing a staggering £48 billion.

The financial secretary, Donald Tsang, addressing an elected legislative assembly that China wants disbanded, said the budget was a defining moment that would calm concerns about the future.

But Mr Tsang, the first ethnic Chinese to manage Hong Kong's financial policy, stuck *firmly to a policy of prudence* practised by his predecessors and supported by a business elite that has switched allegiance from Britain to China but maintained its vociferous opposition to all but the most minimal spending on a social security safety net.

China, eager to woo the wealthy who have always dominated Hong Kong, has also spoken out against any significant boost in welfare.

"They are becoming so stingy with the poor and disabled in Hong Kong. This is absolutely disgraceful. This budget *is supposed to represent* not just Chris Patten's views but those of future SAR government. It sets a very bad tone for the SAR," said Huang Chen-ya, budget spokesman for the Democratic Party. "We have the rich able to drink their red wine but the poor not having enough for daily living."

Mr Patten, a former Conservative Party chairman, said the budget had "struck the right note for the transition".

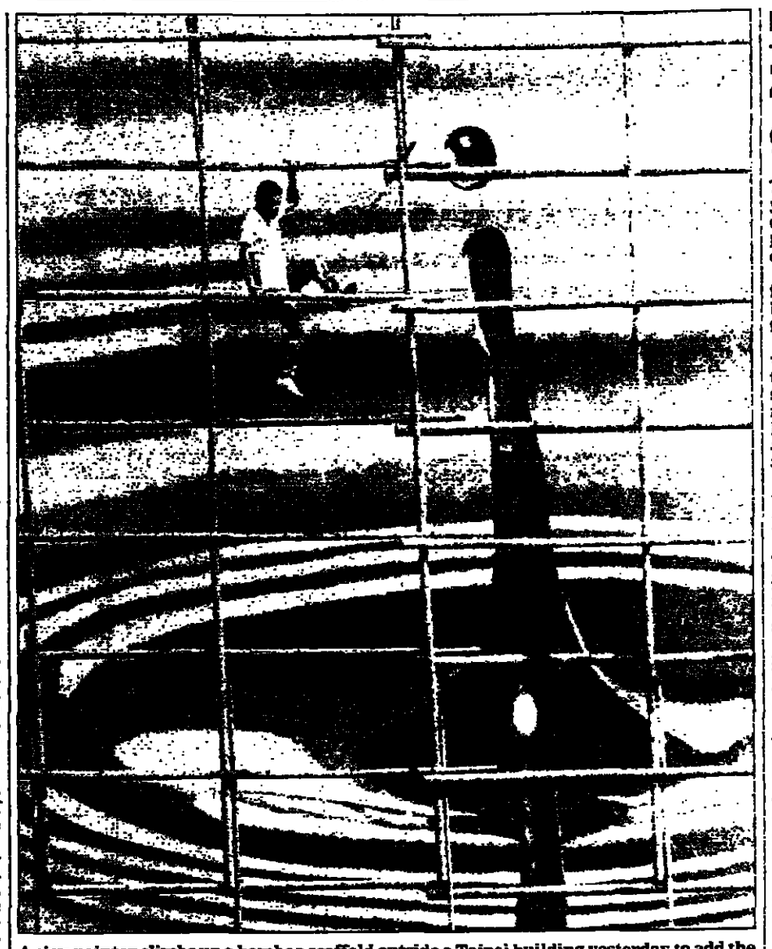
Average incomes in Hong Kong exceed those in Britain. The island boasts Asia's richest man, property developer Lee Shau-kee, and more Rolls Royce cars per capita than any other city.

But, according to a survey by the City University of *Hong Kong, 600,000 people out* of a population of 6.3 million live in deprivation. Only 200,000 receive public assistance. A report by the Society for Community Organisations said 10,000 people were living in "cage homes" — filthy single-bed accommodation often surrounded by a metal cage. This is nearly four times the number acknowledged by the government.

Mr Tsang announced a 9.1 per cent increase in welfare spending to £1.9 billion, a retreat from the double-digit increases in two previous budgets. "We are not miserly," he said. "Even if we have more money we can't spend more, otherwise we will have unacceptable inflation."

China, which was consulted in the drafting of the budget, opposes any abrupt departure from what, for most of the colonial era, was a Victorian policy of basing welfare on *private charity rather than* public money. This began to change recently, with welfare spending increasing 88 per cent in the past five years. But the colony still spends only £500,000 on a system of monthly payments for the poorest residents.

Even so, tycoons and Chinese cadres have united in noisy opposition. Chen Zuoer, *a senior Chinese official* in Hong Kong, accused Mr Patten of allowing welfare spending to career out of control "like a Formula 1 racing car".



A sign painter climbs up a bamboo scaffold outside a Taipei building yesterday to add the finishing touches to an advert for a German washing machine PHOTOGRAPH SAMON KWONG

News in brief

Zulu march ends in gunfire and death

THOUSANDS of angry Zulus marched through Johannesburg yesterday in a show of strength that ended in gunfire. The demonstration commemorated the unpunished deaths of eight people in a similar demonstration in 1994, shortly before the country's first all-race election that ended apartheid.

Police reported at least two deaths and nine injuries — eight from gunshots — during the day, beginning with violence in black townships as Zulu nationalists travelled to the city centre for a rally at the central library.

Zulu leaders, in tribal dress, led individual regiments armed with traditional wooden clubs and mop handles. Speakers at the rally called for justice for the killings three years ago, when security guards at the African National Congress headquarters fired on approaching Zulu marchers. ANC officials, including President Nelson Mandela, have said the marchers intended to attack the building and blamed police for failing to keep them away. — *AP, Johannesburg.*

New hope for hostage talks

TALKS between the Peruvian government and the Tupac Amaru rebels holding 72 hostages at the Japanese ambassador's home in Lima were expected to resume late yesterday. Archbishop Juan Luis Cipriani, one of the guarantors on the talks commisssion, said.

He made a brief statement to reporters after he and two other guarantors, the Canadian ambassador Anthony Vincent and Michel Minnig of the Red Cross, met the rebel leader, Nestor Cerpa, inside the Japanese residence for an hour and 20 minutes. — *Reuter, Lima.*

Nigerian treason charge

THE exiled Nigerian writer, Wole Soyinka, and 11 other dissidents were charged with treason yesterday by Nigeria's military government for a spate of recent bomb blasts in the country. They face the death penalty if convicted.

Mr Soyinka, who won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1986 and is a leading opponent of the Nigerian military leader, General Sani Abacha, said he was not suprised. "We learned the decision to try us on treason charges had been taken before the recent violence. The whole thing is orchestrated. Abacha is trying to get rid of us," he said in California. — *Reuter, Lagos.*

Swords drawn at PEN

WAR has broken out among New York's literary elite, with America's finest wordsmiths trading accusations of censorship, hypocrisy and money-grubbing at PEN, the 75-year-old highbrow writers' club.

Fears that the organisation is sacrificing principles to attract funds — fuelled by the involvement of Michael Ovitz, the former Disney number two and Hollywood agent, in a $1000-a-plate dinner — have prompted Lucy Komisar, a board member, to attack the PEN hierarchy.

The reaction has been savage. John Irving, who resigned from the board last year in disgust at Ms Komisar's editing of the group's quarterly newsletter, has accused her of being "selfish, subversive and undisciplined". Ms Komisar has accused the board of censoring the PEN newsletter to disguise the organisation's links with wealthy donors and play down human rights abuses abroad. — *Richard Thomas, Washington.*

Israel 'abused human rights'

THE decision by the Israeli government to build a Jewish neighbourhood in east Jerusalem is contrary to international law and a "very severe concern", the United Nations' investigator on human rights in the Palestinian territories said yesterday.

In his report to the UN Human Rights Commission, which opened its annual six-week session on Monday, Hannu Halinen, a Finnish diplomat, said there were serious human rights violations in the Occupied Territories last year.

Israel had confiscated Arab-owned land, used live ammunition against Palestinian demonstrators and closed borders preventing Palestinians from going to work in Israel, all against international law. Particularly worrying was the recent lifting of an injunction against "physical and psychological pressure" in the interrogation of Palestinian detainees. This amounted to an "sanctioning of torture and ill-treatment" by the Israeli government, he said. — *AP, Geneva.*

'Missile did not down flight'

FEDERAL investigators yesterday dismissed claims that a United States navy missile shot down TWA Flight 800 off Long Island, New York, last year. "It's just not true," said James Kallstrom, the chief investigator, on NBC's Today Show.

The assistant director of the FBI's New York office said investigators have reviewed every available radar picture and concluded there was no evidence of a missile being fired. — *Reuter, Washington.*

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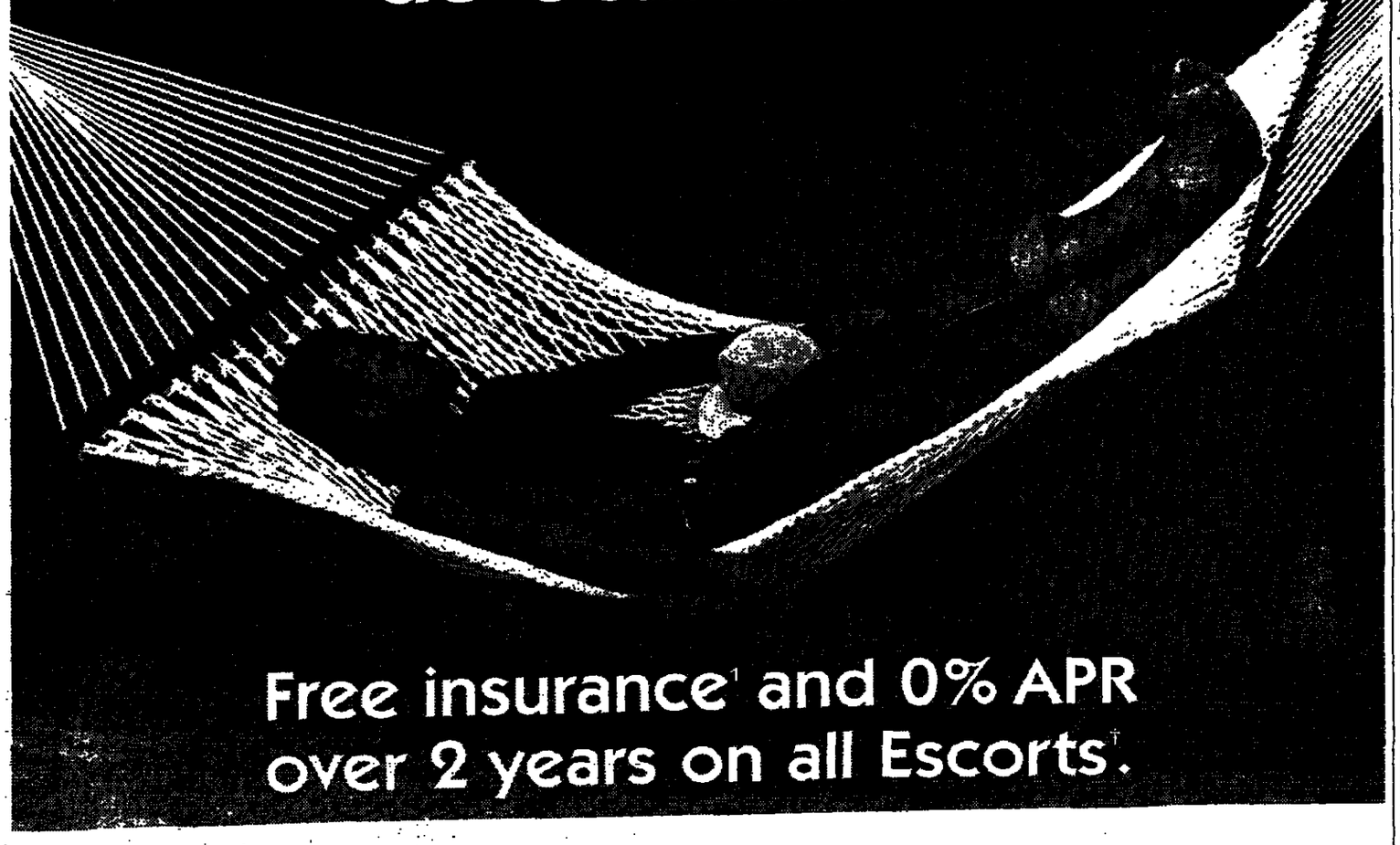

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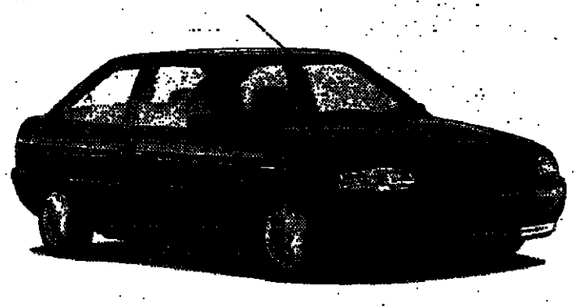

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The Tory wealth miracle

Solution: an impartial inquiry into party funding

EVEN decent and honourable Conservatives may find it difficult to take advice from the former party treasurer Lord McAlpine. He is one of those troublesome irreconcilables who seem to find it intellectually and emotionally impossible to come to terms with the sinking of Baroness Thatcher. Now he has enlisted with Sir James Goldsmith, and was one of those who welcomed Sir George Gardiner aboard last weekend. For all his chubby, cheerful appearance this, Conservatives no doubt tell themselves, is a disappointed, even embittered, man whose pronouncements need to be judged in that light.

Decent and honourable Conservatives, as well as the rest of us, ought even so to take serious account of what Lord McAlpine has been saying about the party's finances, and especially the improvement recorded since the last election, from near destitution to coffers so full that record sums may be spent on the coming election. Here, it seems, is a recovery in the Ernest Saunders class, with a boost, on his lordship's figures, of some £60 million over five years. No one outside a charmed and secretive circle seems to know why. The Conservatives always tell us how dependent they are on a mass of donations from people of no great wealth, but that argument, never compelling, certainly won't wash here. Corporate donors, too, have been nowhere near so generous as they were. "If the party has got 40-odd million quid in the kitty" Lord McAlpine says "and the people generally believed to be giving it have stopped doing so, then where has the money come from?"

On the face of it, this question has much in common with the now better ventilated issues of parliamentary sleaze — cash for questions, MPs enjoying lucrative but still shadowy relations with companies, and the rest. When our politicians speak to us, whether they're backbenchers asking questions about insurance or leaders seeking our votes, we need to know if it's politics speaking, or money. Who, when big sums change hands, is left beholden to whom? The only sure defence we have got against malpractice is complete transparency.

On that basis, it is right that questions should also be asked about the funding of senior Labour figures, though Sir Gordon Downey yesterday rejected with something close to contempt the complaints of Conservative backbench bovver boy *David Shaw* (Dover). Labour, in any case, comes out of it cleaner, because, unlike most Conservatives, it concedes that a problem exists. Labour sees a strong case for a ban on foreign funding, which the Conservatives — even after Nadir, Latsis (who coughed up £500,000, according to Lord McAlpine) and Botnar — still decline to accept. Labour would ask the Nolan committee, or some comparable group, to investigate the whole issue and furnish ground rules. It's perhaps the most disreputable aspect of the Government's record that it wouldn't allow Lord Nolan's committee to look at party funding. The Prime Minister's stock rejoinder — that a House of Commons select committee has already investigated the funding of parties — merely compounds his offence. As he very well knows, the committee divided on party lines: its report represented the views of Conservative members only, hardly the most dispassionate group to judge an issue like this.

Polls suggest the taint of sleaze that hangs around the Conservative Party has helped feed its unpopularity. Mr Major would do something to redeem himself and his party if he promised now that if re-elected he would set up an open inquiry. Better still, he could reveal today just how and where his party has found its new wealth.

When ageing Sid goes into care

Dorrell's paper is more about Tory politics than the real world

STEVE BELL got it right with his new slogan for the Government: Tell Sid his Grandma's for Sale. Yet, compared to what was threatened, yesterday's white paper on social services marks a retreat. Children's services are not being privatised. Dogma was finally forced to bow to reality on this front. There are no private companies with the specialised staff to take on such incredibly difficult work as child abuse investigations and the children's charities made it clear they had no wish to step in. But local authority services for the elderly — residential, day-care and domiciliary — plus services for physically and mentally disabled people would all be under threat from a new Conservative government. The aim is to place all services except children's on a purchaser/provider basis, restructuring social services so that they commission but no longer provide services.

What's wrong with this? First and foremost because it is based on dogma (private good/public bad) rather than hard-edged practice. Private is not always best. It too has had its scandals: badly treated people in old people's homes and staff sexually abusing children in children's homes. Similarly, the voluntary sector has its list of shame. Stephen Dorrell is naive in believing a change of ownership will eliminate scandals and perverse in suggesting the private sector is better value for money. We don't know. There are no authoritative studies. The Audit Commission and Mr Dorrell's social service inspectors are working on it with a series of joint inspections. Ironically, the first was released yesterday giving Stockport near Manchester a glowing report on its efficiency and quality of services. So much for the Secretary of State's ideological prejudices.

Part of the package is pure hype. The private sector already dominates in the provision of residential and nursing care for elderly people with 75 per cent of all places. Why eliminate the small proportion of local authority places? Aren't the Conservatives supposed to believe in choice? A mixture of voluntary, private and public places offers clients more options and is likely to ensure poor people a better deal. Once again the centralist instincts of this highly centralised administration are on open display. Rather than let local areas evolve their own mix of services, Mr Big in Whitehall wants to impose his own structure. But on one front Mr Dorrell ought to win support: the need for a more independent regulatory system. Initially — and absurdly — he was going to place this with the trading standards department of local councils but he has now come up with a more sensible idea: an independent agency which would monitor both health and social services.

One puzzle remains. Why does the minister believe this privatisation will be popular? Simple: it will be with the electorate in his own party selecting the next Tory leader even if the public will remain deeply unimpressed.

Burying Shakespeare in cement

The treatment of the Globe Theatre is an act of philistinism

IF THERE were a national award for cultural barbarism it should go to those who have squandered the opportunity of the century: the chance to open up the remains of two Elizabethan theatres intimately associated with Shakespeare. The remarkably preserved foundations of the Rose — on which Shakespeare, Marlowe and Jonson trod the boards — was uncovered in 1989 during excavations before the construction of an office block by Southwark Bridge. Instead of developing it into a living monument for lovers of Shakespeare, the authorities allowed a 10 storey edifice to be built — though thanks to a last-minute campaign the remains were saved (though not before eight piles were driven into them). Now it lies like an unvisited graveyard checked for humidity once a month but closed to the public.

This year the authorities have the chance to make amends: by excavating the remains of the original Globe theatre, a stone's throw from the Rose, where Hamlet, King Lear and Macbeth were first played. Will they rise to the occasion? Of course not. The building on top of the Globe will be converted into a four-storey block of flats with underground car park and the rest of the site sealed as a permanent burial. They won't listen to the request of the Globe Trust (builders of the replica Globe theatre and museum) to allow keyhole surgery excavations to learn more about the shape of the original. Meanwhile, in Greenwich, hundreds of millions of lottery money is to be spent on a temporary millennium exhibition, a part of which could have transformed this area into a breathtaking memorial which would pay for itself with tourist earnings. Instead it will be preserved as a mausoleum to philistinism of which even this dying government should feel thoroughly ashamed.

— THE WOMAN WHO SUGGESTED ACTUALLY CLEANING THE SHIT OFF THE MEAT — APOLOGIES TO B.MEATEMAN ©Steve Bell 1997

Letters to the Editor

Our age-old duty of care

THE plans to introduce a government-supported private insurance scheme to offset the possible costs of long-term care fail to address the need to provide adequate care on an equitable basis for all older people who require it (Care plan 'to help rich only', March 11). It fails to answer older people's complaint that they are being required unfairly to support themselves through the hazards of old age contrary to the principle of collectively pooled risk underlying other parts of the health and welfare system.

The scheme will benefit only those able to afford the premium required to pay for the policies.

If there is to be insurance for long-term care, there is a strong argument for a comprehensive, mandatory national scheme based on capacity to contribute but with a safety net for those who lack that capacity.
Gillian Dalley.
Director,
Centre for Policy on Ageing,
25-31 Ironmonger Row,
London EC1V 3QP.

AM I missing something? What is wrong with selling a home one can no longer live in to pay for one's continuing care? All the party spokespeople seem to be taking it for granted that it is somehow immoral to expect people to spend their savings rather than pass them on.
Kath Checkland.
21 Parkside Lane,
Mellor,
Stockport SK6 5PQ.

THE Government is about to launch a final assault on local authorities as care providers, despite, as your report on the inspection of services in Stockport shows, the success of the mix of private, voluntary and public provision that currently exists.

The total number of beds available in private, voluntary, NHS and local authorities in 1991 was 521,000. Of these, local authorities had 114,000, the private sector 244,000. Five years later the local authorities' share had shrunk to 71,000 and the private sector had grown to 319,000 from an overall increased total of 563,000.

The trend has, therefore, continued to favour the private sector. Are any of the users' local authority services demanding that the provision of their care must be passed to private owners? What evidence is there that public provision does not have the support of people who use the service?

One argument for the demolition of public provision has been the monopoly debate. Corporate providers, ie those owning three or more homes, have risen from 8 per cent in 1988 to 22 per cent in 1995; there were 460 homes owned by companies quoted on the stockmarket in 1995 and the upward trend continues. Gradually the small home owner is being swallowed by the more powerful corporate provider who, it is estimated, will soon control over 50 per cent of the available beds.
David Burchell.
Assistant Director,
British Association of
Social Workers,
16 Kent Street,
Birmingham B5 6RD.

I'M NOT opposed to privatisation of social services per se. In fact we're quite used to working with the voluntary and independent sector: more than 80 per cent of residential care for elderly people is already provided by the private sector. Meals-on-wheels have been delivered on our behalf by the WRVS for over 50 years. In Dorset, we have contracts with more than 1,000 profit and not-for-profit organisations.

Of course, at the moment, social-services departments can set service standards and monitor quality and value-for-money. Who's going to be around in Mr Dorrell's deregulated world to keep up standards and protect the interests of the public?
Alan Tetlow.
Chairman, Social
Services Committee,
Dorset County Council,
58 Canford Cliffs Road,
Poole, Dorset BH13 7AA.

ALTHOUGH we agree with your Leader (March 11) that these proposals are no answer to the funding problem, in that they benefit only the healthy and better-off, we differ strongly with you and the Joseph Rowntree Foundation on the question of means-tested charges for nursing/residential-homes accommodation.

These charges form by far the biggest element of residential-care costs and so the amount of relief afforded by such a system would be small and would not prevent the enforced sale of assets.

We certainly agree that any system should be funded by National Insurance, but to cover all care costs, not just medical costs. We do not accept that this would be too expensive.
Ron Crew.
Chair, Retired Members'
Sub-Committee,
MSF Union, Southern Region,
1 Caves Farm Close,
Sandhurst,
Berkshire GU47 8EA.

A new Birtian philosophy: bias rather helps understanding

SEVERAL of those responding to Martin Bell's essay, including a professional historian, seem to assume that there are things called "facts" that can be "objectively" stated (Letters, March 11). Philosophers of science have acknowledged for over 20 years that no neutral language of "facts" distinct from a "theory" language of interpretation is possible, even for the physical realm.

For "theory" read "values", "attachments" or "opinions" in the language of human affairs. As for history, the greatness of every great historian since Gibbon has lain in the success with which they made history a vehicle for expressing their fundamental values.

When it appears that "the facts" are being allowed to "speak for themselves", this usually only testifies to the rhetorical skill of the person presenting them, for there is rarely much doubt as to what we are to understand them as saying. A truly "unattached" witness would be unable to make sense of what might be going on. Alas, the media are only too full of such people. Martin Bell is right not to wish to be counted among them.
Graham Richards.
1 Claremont Road,
Tunbridge Wells,
Kent TN1 1SY.

WOULD your correspondents care to explain why journalists disagree, historians disagree, political scientists disagree, cosmologists disagree etc, etc? Haven't they read Carr's What is History? Did they completely miss Bell's clear pointing to the sources of every journalist's subjectivity? Hasn't it yet registered that fact-gathering is done by humans, who, in the nature of things, are constrained by understanding, perception, motivation, the law, social mores and the "fact" of having to select facts? How do they defend the tendency of the media to under-report some events and fail to report others?
Ivor Solomons.
86 Woodside Road,
Norwich NR7 9QW.

MOST of your correspondents complain about Martin Bell's alleged "abandoning of truth and objectivity" on the grounds that journalists' first duty is to report the truth, not change the world. Can I point out that such a position is an ethical and political choice and can mean the denying of responsibility to fellow humans in favour of "the profession". Isn't this a greater evil?
Nick Hunt.
Independent Studies,
Lancaster University,
Lancaster LA1 4YW.

WAS the Bosnian conflict a civil war or an act of international aggression? The outcome of the conflict was determined very largely by the way this question was answered. Reporters who spoke the facts as they saw them — the bombardment of unarmed civilians, the use of food as a weapon of war — were routinely dismissed by policy-makers in the terms Martin Bell has described.

There is no contradiction between "attachment" and "objectivity". When officialdom, and much of the media that support it, so wilfully misread a situation on the grounds that the facts to prove them wrong are unavailable, it is inevitable that journalists will reject the role of neutral observers.
Bernard Bessegilik.
21 rue E Cornet,
Pantin 93500, France.

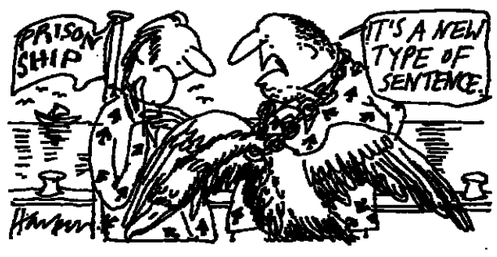
Albanian spice

LET Richard Norton-Taylor (Champions go to war, March 10) detect "hidden agendas" among those commenting on Albania if it keeps him happy — but why smear the British Helsinki Human Rights Group as "self-styled"?

Like its many independent counterparts in the 58 OSCE states, the group is a non-governmental organisation, not an official body. Set up like other autonomous Helsinki groups to exercise the rights granted to citizens' bodies under the 1973 Helsinki Agreement to monitor states' fulfilment of the "human-rights basket", it receives no taxpayers' money. Nor does it enjoy the generous patronage of Lord Rothschild, unlike the Albanian Society of Britain.

Unfortunately, there are government-organised (so-called) non-governmental organisations — "gongos" — to be found in many OSCE member states. In Georgia after a similar scenario in 1991 to the one now being played out in Albania, the victorious alliance of ex-communists and local mafia (Mkhedrioni) sought respectability by establishing "gongos" to muddy the waters and hide the new regime's record of torture of its opponents. Let's hope that is not happening in Albania.
Mark Almond.
Oriel College,
Oxford OX1 4EW.

HILARY Coffman (Letters, March 12) need not worry that Tony Blair's reputation could be sullied by any reference to the Spice Girls; that honour must go to Bernard Jenkin MP, who impaled himself upon a Spice Girls poster and was photographed there in the local press, his head sticking through the tattered remnants, which flapped around his shoulders.
Val Mainwood.
62 Belle Vue Road,
Colchester CO7 9LD.



Curse this ship and all who sail her

IT'S not just "many Portlanders" who do not want the prison ship (Return of the prison hulk, March 12). It has been opposed by a full meeting of Weymouth and Portland Borough Council (26 votes to eight), the president of the local Chamber of Commerce, the English Tourist Board, the chairman of the Prison Governors' Association and local residents throughout Weymouth and Portland.

We were asked if we wanted this ship. Our elected representatives said no. Why is it still being foisted on us?
Steve Elsworth.
9 Old Castle Road,
Weymouth,
Dorset DT4 8QB.

I WAS born on Portland and my parents still live there; my father is a retired prison officer. We are enraged that this small community continues to be a dumping ground for the Government's problems.

Portlanders have already suffered the departure of the Navy and closure of the docks as a result of defence cuts, turning the lower part of the island into a ghost town. The local fishing industry has all but collapsed thanks to overfishing by huge ships from overseas fleets. The whole of Portland lacks public amenities and investment. The kind of investment it can do without is an over-priced, under-staffed, rusting ship full of angry prisoners.
Mark Williams.
136 Sprignall,
South Bretton,
Peterborough PE3 9YH.

AS someone born in the area I took much interest in your story about the "floating Alcatraz". Can Mr Ian Bruce MP tell us just exactly how will the "new arrival" boost the island economy? Are local publicans to expect men in baggy pyjamas decorated by arrows calling in for a swift half before escaping to the mainland?
Ashley Biles.
53 Scotts Road,
London W12 8HP.

SHOULD we not just go the whole hog and go a little further back into the past in order to get this madness out of our systems? In short, with the age of transportation in mind, when is Michael Howard going to ask the Australians if they could help us out once again?
Peggie Hunter.
Honorary Secretary,
Howard League, Scotland,
17 Warriston Crescent,
Edinburgh EH3 5LB.

We do not publish letters where only an e-mail address is supplied; please include a full postal address. We may edit letters: shorter ones are more likely to appear. We cannot acknowledge letters

Holloway's maternal approach

YOUR claims about the future treatment of Roisin McAliskey while in Prison Service custody (Leader, March 11) are misleading. As I have made clear, a decision on whether she will be allowed to keep her baby has not yet been made. In common with other pregnant mothers-to-be at Holloway, Ms McAliskey's case will be heard by a local panel of specialists. This will be taking place today, March 13; a decision will then be made.

She continues to receive full pre-natal care, which includes daily visits from the prison doctor, and weekly check-ups with a gynaecologist, an obstetrician and a midwife. There is no question of Ms McAliskey, or indeed any female prisoner, wearing an ankle chain after the baby's birth.

I share your view that the custody of prisoners, particularly expectant mothers, needs to be handled humanely and sensitively. There are 30 such prisoners at Holloway, and I am determined that they should all receive the right level of care.
R R Tilt.
Director-general,
HM Prison Service,
Cleland House, Page Street,
London SW1P 4LN.

A Country Diary

FINDHORN: After what seemed like three weeks of gales it was pleasant to drive east of Inverness in sunshine with little or no wind. The first stop was at the Grangehall estate to see the recently renovated dovecote. Many Highland dovecotes have either been demolished or are in need of repair, so it was good to see one that had been restored to its former glory. This dovecote was unusual in having two storeys, as the lower part had been used for keeping pigs so that, to get into the pigeon storey, you had to climb a ladder to the door. Fortunately the estate keeper had finished the new metal ladder only the day before and it was with anticipation that I climbed to the open door just as a pig came out of one of the entrance holes. In one corner there was a vertical line of the old nest boxes pitted with age and woodworm but on the opposite wall were a large number of new nestboxes, and at the top there was some nest material sticking out. I photographed the old and new nestboxes and then went down the ladder again, conscious of the fact that I am scared of heights, let alone ladders. There was an innovation on the outside as the rat ledge — to keep rats out — that went right round the upper part of the building now had lead on the upper surface which would keep out any rainwater that could seep in through the walls. At one time a law was passed that made the owners of dovecotes have an earth floor so that the droppings of the pigeons could be gathered up, as with added sulphur it could make a form of gunpowder. Presumably at Grangehall they simply carried soil up into the floor of the dovecote. The dovecote was built about 1800 and the outside walls are unusual in that the coursing was decorated and outlined with small chips of stone piercing the mortar and known as *galletting*. At least this is one Highland dovecote whose future is assured and the pigeons are already recolonising the structure.

RAY COLLIER

Diary

Matthew Norman

UNABLE to hear clearly what Betty Boothroyd was saying on telly yesterday about pagers, like the one Labour's Brian Wilson used on Tuesday to such outrage, we paged the man himself. "Vacate chamber ASAP," read our message. "Call 713 4370 re Madam Speaker now. Most urgent." Within two minutes, a bemused Scotsman was on the phone, nervously asking: "Err, who am I through to?" On hearing the words "Guardian Diary", a long pause gave way to mirth. "You see, the system works," he said, laughing. "This is Brian Wilson." What, we asked, did Betty say? "Oh dear, I'd better watch myself. Basically, bleepers are out, vibrators are in." Oo, er, missus, indeed. The gist of the ruling, he said, was that MPs can read messages but not use the content in debate. "I think it's OK to have messages like 'Do something about your hair', like I once had in a TV studio," he explained, before taking his leave. As rock historians will know, it was a similar incident with a prototype pager 30 years ago that inspired Brian Wilson — then with the Beach Boys — to write the song Good Vibrations. And now he's getting excitations as Mandy Mandelson's campaign deputy. Progress? Who are we to judge?

THE Referendum Party video — quite a collector's item, with only 3.5 million in circulation — has arrived. Beginning with some cove ranting about "Europe's dominant nation . . . Germany", it is only after an hilarious cameo from "farmer and broadcaster Robin Page", who plays a village idiot in a field, that Mad Jimmy Goldsmith does his Blofeld special to the inevitable sounds of Elgar. Last word, however, goes to Viscount Tonypandy. "For me to remain silent now would be an act of treason," says that fine Speaker of yesterday. "God bless your efforts as you battle for Britain." And God bless you, Mad Jim, for keeping us so richly entertained.

IN an unlikely reinvention, Vinnie Jones is emerging as football's Melvyn Bragg. Newly Satellite TV Personality of the Year, Vinnie is now revealed as the backer of Welsh comic play Badfinger, which opens at London's Donmar Warehouse tonight. Those who recall from Vinnie's philistine era the photo involving four bad fingers (not to mention a fairly naughty thumb) and Gazza's scrotum will cower in anticipation of the next Welsh training session . . . Vinnie's Wales teammate Ryan Giggs has snubbed the play. Giggsy's agent told producer Matthew Byam that his boy would not stump up the moment he heard that — along with Anthony Hopkins and Chelsea's Mark Hughes — Neil Kinnock was an angel. Next time there's a squad training session, Giggsy, don't forget your box.

THE Diary's new monthly PC Brains Award for March goes to Police Constable Jon Stuart of Wimbledon. Summoned to help a woman who had left the keys inside her car along with her baby, the constable had made several doomed attempts to open the door when he rang the police station for guidance. This, according to Police Magazine, is how the exchange ensued. PC Stuart: "Unable to gain access." Wimbledon nick: "Try smashing a quarterlight" (for younger readers, the small bit of glass at the side of a car window near the lock); "the less damage you cause the better". Stuart: "If I do the quarterlight, it won't be big enough to get the baby through." Nick: "No, I meant smash the quarterlight and open the door." Helmets off, PC Brains!

POSITIONING himself in the vanguard of modern feminist orthodoxy, Richard Harris gives an interview to Loaded. "They go on about Madonna's sexuality," says the Irish actor. "I'm not even sure she knows where it is. If I took her out with my boys one night . . . I'd take her out myself and show her what sex is all about. She'd turn pale!" What a charmer he is.

Swampy & co have a lesson for the Greens

Commentary

Hugo Young

THE Green Party, entering the election lists, presents a challenge to more than commerce and government. It raises a painful question about democracy. I'm pretty keen on green ideas. I think green arguments are appallingly neglected in the actions, if not the words, of the mainstream parties. But I have to doubt whether the Green Party, fighting a parliamentary general election, serves any purpose at all. What its performance may illuminate is that, for the agenda it cares about, parliamentary politics are counter-productive. Engaging with the mother-lode of democracy will probably not make things better but worse.

Every vote will be a gesture, but together they won't be enough to count. Although the Greens may well do better, in the seats where they run, than the plutocratic shambles created by Sir James Goldsmith, they won't add up to anything like the two million people who are active supporters of greenish pressure-groups. By the rules of democracy, therefore, they will fail. They've entered a game where the verdict will be damning. Rather like the Pro-Life Alliance, the measurable effect of their intervention will be to convey the impression that the cause they defend has a derisory number of supporters, which mainstream politicians will duly be able to ignore.

In the course of its campaign, the party will raise important issues. In addition to a ribald line on drugs and Europe, it will no doubt try and build on the green movement's record of alerting the country, years ahead of time, to horrors in food production, exhaust emissions and other deadly activities which the mainstream political world woke up to much too late. Untroubled by the television news, it will be able to maintain an elevated tone. Its discourse will be more than sound-bites, and it will be attractive to a certain kind of radical disdainer of conventional politics. But it will get nowhere. By comparison with the non-parliamentary route, electoral politics will produce zero, perhaps minus zero.

This is the comparison that matters. There are choices to be made. Despite their rivalries, the pressure-groups do intermingle with the Green Party, but the question is about effort and how to use it. Given a choice between the Green Party and Friends of the Earth, it makes more sense to expend resources on the Friends. I draw the salutary conclusion that direct action is the political method logically to be preferred by anyone who regards environmental issues as the ones that matter most.

Not that direct action has had many mighty successes. The Newbury by-pass, after all, is being built, and Salisbury is being positioned to follow. Twyford Down is despoiled for ever. Nuclear waste continues to trundle across the country. Only veal calves come to mind as a rare specific instance where ministers could be seen scurrying to respond to on-the-ground protest against the cruelties of crated transportation. Mostly, the juggernaut grinds forward, as it doubtless soon will again at Manchester Airport.

But the green cause is about teaching and converting, as much as campaigning and winning. The long-term message matters more than the short-term outcome. Swampy, emerging from his road-denying tunnels, became an early candidate for man of the year because he made the public think about a serious question more fervently than any speech by John Major has ever made them do. Even an elected MP for the Green Party, never to be seen this side of a new electoral system, would be far less likely to make people think about roads and traffic and pollution and despoliation of every kind than the tranquil zealots who get themselves on television, sacrificing their own comforts above, alongside or below the bulldozers.

Such action isn't sufficient in itself, and isn't intended to be. It's an intervention by non-democratic means in the democratic process, designed to influence democratic politicians. This the green movement has done, without having a single MP. The consciousness of conventional politicians has risen somewhat, to meet the threat that greenery has engendered. Yesterday, John Gummer, the prime example of a minister who has allowed himself to be educated into green consciousness, announced a National Air Quality Strategy, jacking up anti-pollution powers of local authorities, which wouldn't have been heard of if care for the environment had been left to market forces and the politics of the easy option. The air is choked with claims

> The green cause is about teaching and converting, as much as campaigning and winning

to be the "real" party of greenery.

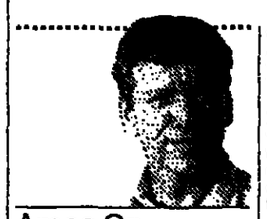
But even under a barrage of green-consciousness, the limits of commitment remain startling. Latest proof of this was Labour's reneging on last year's emphatic support for the lowering of VAT on home insulation and energy-saving goods, which the party previously welcomed on jobs and health grounds, but which this week fell victim to its paranoid fear of the smallest pledge to spend public money. This was a pitiful display of deluded short-termism. Likewise, no genuinely green politician, aware of the proper priorities and ready to look awkward facts in the face, would ever have remained as stubbornly blind as this one to the animal-feed scandal that ended in the BSE disaster.

Establishment politics, in short, have a natural tendency to retreat from the multiple inconveniences of environmental issues unless the practitioners are kicked hard and often. The brutal power of instant commerce supports them, regardless of the copious research (notably an excellent IPPR study, Green Tax Reform, by Stephen Tindale and Gerald Hotham) showing the serious economic benefits, especially in employment, available from prudent greenery. With rare exceptions, the present government has rated the environmental option low.

The failed gentility of a tiny electioneering party will not change this. As a democrat, one shouldn't have to say this, but it's true. The Greens may have had tiny pockets of success in local councils, but on the national stage what's needed is action to raise the cost and the profile of conduct that keeps on wrecking bits of our world.

I don't pretend that green policies are either obvious or easy. All over the world, they raise the toughest political problems. The trade-offs between growth and pollution, stasis and modernity, mass goods and positional goods, will always be very complex. But public awareness is the name of the game. Who can most seriously raise it, striking a chord among people ready to be persuaded that things have got to change? By that test, Swampy and his friends seem deeply serious, while the Green Party plays, with all too compliant sincerity, by rules designed to drown it out.

No one is alone in Jerusalem



Amos Oz

THE Netanyahu government approaches the Palestinian peace process holding its nose. Right from the word go, Netanyahu and some of his ministers have felt the Oslo accords stink. Nations cannot win a war nor make peace if they have neither faith nor passion for what they are doing.

Har Homa, or Mount Wall, is a barren hill in the south-eastern outskirts of Jerusalem. Most of it had been requisitioned by a former Israeli government from Jewish private owners, some of it from Arab private owners. All of it had been under Jordanian occupation before the Six-Day War of 1967. Contrary to present-day rhetoric on all sides, the real question concerning Har Homa is not whether it is crucially urgent for Israel to build a new Jewish neighbourhood there, nor is it a question of whether or not Israel has the right to do so. The question is, how important is peace compared to other needs and other appetites? The question is, are we still committed to concluding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with a compromise which will provide the Palestinians with a free homeland and the Israelis with security and recognition? There is no way we Israelis can expand and gain peace at the same time.

As long as Israelis and Palestinians were in a state of war, the rules of "Catch as catch can" and "In war, anything goes" prevailed on both sides. The new chapter which opened in Oslo does not create a honeymoon between the parties, but it does imply a switch from "In war, anything goes" to "In a dispute, meet halfway". Disputes are not resolved by bulldozers or by gunfire, but through a process of give and take. If Israel wishes to spread a new neighbourhood over a controversial terrain in Jerusalem, it ought to negotiate it with the Palestinians and convince them to withdraw their objections.

The Oslo Accords are based on a revolutionary idea — revolutionary for both parties — namely, that in the dispute over the Holy Land, each claim is only valid up to a point. Up to which point? And how to reconcile the contradictory claims in a way which both sides can live with? These questions will take a long time to settle. They call for patience and wisdom. Bulldozers and terrorist attacks are not the right tools for this labour. It has to be done with caution, generosity and vision, and above all, with emphatic imagination. Unless Israelis and Palestinians learn to ask themselves how their actions and their words are being perceived by their counterparts, we are all doomed to go on injuring each other like blind swordfish in a tank.

The logic of Israel's decision to settle Har Homa at this time is a logic of conflict: creating unilateral accomplished facts, and making the Palestinians and world public opinion swallow these facts, albeit with a protest. As long as the Palestinians were in the business of killing Israelis regardless of Israeli policy, some Israelis could see a good reason to make the Palestinians submit to Israel's might, at least for as long as they refused to recognise some of our rights. This logic must die now. The logic of peace must take over, and the logic of peace is that while each party to the conflict is strong enough to derail peace, it takes the combined strength of both to achieve it.

It is perfectly legitimate for Israelis and Palestinians to lament over the mutual concessions they must make, and to mourn their unobtainable dreams, but a terrible tragedy will occur if, rather than mourn and lament, we — on both sides — go back to the bloody pattern of behaviour, if we act as if the other does not exist, or as if the other does not matter, or as if the other only understands the language of accomplished facts and of brute force.

FOR decades Israelis and Palestinians used the language of power. This language alone did not bring, nor could it bring, the Palestinians a homeland of their own. Nor did it, or could it, bring the Israelis security and recognition. No mountain, no wall can possibly defend Jerusalem against Jerusalem. We must all come to terms, at last, with the fact that we are not alone in Jerusalem. Just as we are not alone in this country. Whoever dwells in fiery rhetoric about "indivisible Jerusalem" ought to open their eyes and see that the city of Jerusalem is in fact a divided city, painfully so.

Perhaps it can become united, even integrated. But whoever wishes to see Jerusalem united ought to come to terms with the fact that no one lives alone in Jerusalem.

Perhaps the simple words — "no one is alone in Jerusalem" — ought to appear on bumper stickers on every Israeli or Palestinian car, on every notice board, on every street corner. He who acts as if he is alone in Jerusalem condemns himself to live forever like a walled mountain: besieged, beleaguered and secluded.

© Amos Oz 1997. Amos Oz's latest book is Don't Call It Night (Vintage, £5.99)

If the Tories' plans to privatise old-age care go ahead, one thing is certain: the least well-off will be losers. **Andrew Dilnot** and **Richard Disney** plot the pitfalls

Help yourself

SUSPEND your disbelief. Imagine the Conservatives win the election. What next? They would have to implement their recent proposals on pensions and on long-term care. Would they make any sense?

Starting with their plans on pensions, perhaps the most implausible feature is the timing of the main change, which wouldn't affect any pension until 2040. The Beveridge system was introduced in 1948, restructured in 1961, 1975, 1986, 1995 and now again (maybe) in 1997. That's an average of one major overhaul every ten years, so any change that is 40 years away has a vanishingly small probability of happening in anything like the form first proposed.

Under the 2040 proposal, new generations of workers would be given a rebate of £9 per week to fund their basic pension. This rebate would be paid into a privately managed retirement savings account which would pay a pension, the level of which would depend on the performance of the assets in which it was invested. If the fund failed to accumulate enough money, the Government would guarantee to pay a sum at least as high as the basic state pension then in force. The first pensions would be paid in 2040.

In addition, instead of belonging to the secondary earnings-related state pension scheme (Serps), all individuals who are not in a private scheme would have 5 per cent of their earnings paid into the account to provide a pension instead of Serps. This pension would not be guaranteed by the Government. Individuals could make additional contributions into this pension account if they chose.

The basic pension change is a real departure. For the last 18 years the Government has sought to hold down public spending and taxation, and one of the most important ways it has done so has been by reducing the value of pensions relative to earnings. The basic state pension has fallen from 20 per cent of average male earnings in 1977 to 15 per cent now, and is on course for 6 or 7 per cent in the middle of the next century. We wouldn't need to raise taxes to pay for the basic state pension, because we are well on the way to abolishing it. But last week's proposal would mean higher taxes for the next 40 years, to pre-fund a benefit the Conservatives didn't seem committed to, and which Labour too is now going to allow to wither on the vine. Yet more cross-dressing.

> We won't need to raise taxes to pay for the basic state pension, because we are well on the way to abolishing it

There are two main problems with abolishing Serps. The first is that many of those still in Serps have sufficiently low earnings to be very unattractive customers to private-sector providers. The second is that some people just don't want private provision, and would rather trust the state.

On long-term care, the major issue for debate may be topping up, rather than the basic partnership scheme. By encouraging means-tested payments to exist alongside use of private insurance funds to top up quality of provision, inequalities in consumption for those relying on state provision are encouraged.

What is the common thread to these proposals, and is there a wider agenda? It's a departure from the traditional post-war way of organising public interventions; either the continental European model of comprehensive social-welfare provision, or the Beveridge scheme of lifetime "social insurance".

Both the pension reform and the long-term healthcare proposal have a quite different twin-track philosophy from the comprehensive approach and Beveridge's "social insurance". First, "basic" transfers are in effect to be provided in the form of cash vouchers, rather than by direct state provision. Thus people will be given £9 per week to buy a pension which will substitute for the existing basic state pension. And they will have just enough to buy minimal residential accommodation through various earmarked social-security benefits. Second, the "passport" to greater state largesse than this minimum is a willingness to buy private insurance. Engaging in a "partnership" with an insurance company buys you an offset on long-term healthcare which keeps your capital intact.

IT IS not fanciful to see this philosophy underpinning other "privatisations" of public services, notably health and education. The split of the purchaser from the provider in the NHS reforms of the past few years is a natural precursor to separating public provision from public finance. Vouchers for nursery education and, perhaps, for a "basic" level of tertiary education, if top-up fees are introduced, are similar developments. Alternative qualities of healthcare conditional on the willingness of individuals to buy complementary healthcare insurance plans are a real possibility.

So does this all matter? Will it be attractive to future governments of whatever persuasion? We won't or can't raise the taxes required to pay for public services to the level we want. So a combination of compulsion and insurance may be an answer if it allows people the choice of quality while preserving some guaranteed minimum. But redistribution becomes much harder: private insurance cannot transfer from rich to poor, or across generations. The proposed schemes provide some guaranteed floor but we have no idea what this will be worth in 10 or 20 years.

Another concern is that insuring every risk through a private market reduces the scope for diversification. Bad outcomes in pension plans cannot easily be insured by redistributing across generations, for example. If ageing populations were to be associated with falling stockmarket values, then returns on pensions, healthcare policies, endowment mortgages, PEPs, and the various insurance vehicles, would all fall together. "Mixed" funding implies some degree of co-insurance, and full private insurance may not provide the diversification required.

So moving to vouchers and topping up may be one way of getting higher standards and greater choice for those who can afford it, without higher public spending and taxes. But we came in on public provision largely to protect those who could not afford it; so if this is the route we go down, whoever is in power, we need to look hard at how we will protect those who cannot top up. Because if standards for the better off are ultimately determined by their own spending, they may become less keen to pay higher taxes to bring public standards along with them.

Andrew Dilnot is Director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies; Richard Disney is Professor of Economics at Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London, and a research fellow at the Institute for Fiscal Studies

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Robert Browning

Classic friend of modern Greece

ROBERT Browning, who has died aged 83, was one of the extraordinary, wide-ranging and productive historians formed in the world of post-war British communism. Less famous than his counterparts such as Christopher Hill, E P Thompson and Eric Hobsbawm, with their more British and (relatively) modern focus, and less well known than some working in his area of classical Greek and Byzantine history, such as A H M Jones or Sir Steven Runciman, Browning nonetheless leaves behind him a formidable legacy. A Scottish internationalist, from whom Britain benefited greatly, his pioneering articles, accessible books and organisational skills established a vital centre of academic excellence at London University, which attracted students from all over the world. Perhaps his outstanding legacy was the construction of influential links with Greece today, not least through his chairmanship of the British Committee for the Restitution of the Parthenon Marbles.

Robert Browning was born in Glasgow where after Kelvinside Academy, he studied at Glasgow University before winning a Snell Exhibition to Balliol College, Oxford. It was there that his capacity to absorb foreign languages attracted attention. He was phenomenally clever at grasping the structures of different languages and pronouncing them with an enviable accuracy. But he never allowed his gentle Scots accent to become confused with any of the others. This control was related to his sense of discipline which rarely permitted him to display strong emotion.

He once said that he was so well primed that if you told him to stand up and speak, he would automatically go on for 55 minutes, whatever the subject. And it was very difficult to stop him, even if only 20 minutes had been allotted to each speaker. His manner was charming, modest, reserved and belied a firm even obdurate core. Behind the smile, there were tougher sinews.

It is tempting to relate these characteristics to his political convictions, which remained well-hidden beneath his intellectual brilliance. He was for the best part of his life a member of the Communist Party. At the onset of the war, he was dispatched to learn Russian and sent out to the Middle East. After a tour of duty in Cairo and Italy, he ended up in the Balkans where he served as interpreter to the Commander-in-Chief of British forces. His interest in other Slavic languages, such as Bulgarian, but also Georgian and Albanian, dates from this period. After the war he returned to Oxford and one year later gained his first academic job at University College, London.

Thus began a long career at London University, to which he devoted his remarkable administrative skills while teaching several generations of younger classicists and writing his major books, which range from *The Linear B Texts from Knossos* (1955), *Medieval and Modern Greek* (1969), *Justinian and Theodore* (1971), *The Emperor Julian*, *Byzantium and Bulgaria* (both 1975), *The Byzantine Empire* (1981) to *The Greek World* (1985). In 1965 he was appointed to the chair of ancient history and classics at Birkbeck College, where he remained until his retirement in 1981. The move was marked by his election to the editorial board of Past and Present, to which he contributed two of his outstanding articles: *Byzantine Scholarship* and *Enlightenment and Repression in Twelfth Century Byzantium*. In 1987 Browning was elected to the British Academy and three years later to the Academy of Athens.

HIS retirement was even more international than his London career, including numerous visiting appointments notably at Dumbarton Oaks, the Centre for Byzantine Studies in Washington DC, where he ran a series of highly-admired classes on palaeography among other topics. He also served as a sort of roving ambassador for Byzantine Studies in the US, giving inspiring introductory lectures for which he became justly famous, and took a major role in the establishment of the new University of Cyprus. His many students, especially from Australia, Greece, Cyprus and America, contributed to two *Festschriften*, *Maistor* (produced in 1984 to mark his retirement) and *Philhellene* (1996) for his 85th birthday.

While his first interest lay with the classical languages and culture of the ancient world, he rapidly expanded his concern to later forms of Greek. This brought him into the orbit of Byzantine civilisation which perpetuated the classical heritage in medieval forms of Greek through to the Italian Renaissance and beyond. But Browning did not stop there. Like George Thomson, another communist classicist, he found in the spoken Greek of the 20th century plenty to explore. In one of his most celebrated books, *Medieval and Modern Greek* (1969), he traces the roots of ancient Greek into both the purist *katharevousa* and the demotic, street Greek of ordinary people. He was naturally sensitive to the problem posed by two forms of modern Greek (diglossia), which divided the wealthy, educated classes from the poor. And he never spoke anything but demotic, condemning *katharevousa* as an artificial fake.

Given his political concerns, it would have been natural for him to champion the vernacular literature of the medieval period rather than the imitative Attic Greek employed by Byzantine scholars and administrators. But Browning's training in the classics led him to concentrate precisely on the high culture of Byzantium, the language and literature of the most educated clerics of the Middle Ages, whose education, based on the study of ancient writers, was so similar to his own. Under Browning's sophisticated analysis, their compositions for particular court events, addresses to the emperor or funerary orations, for example, became much more than exercises in the preservation of Attic Greek. He revealed their social and ceremonial function, their novel vocabulary, and their indirect reflection of contemporary events. Through his articles on particular speeches, on the letter collection of an anonymous medieval teacher, which he discovered and published in 1954, and on unknown poems and commentaries, Byzantine authors can be seriously appreciated. These shorter analyses reveal his deep knowledge and love of the Greek language, qualities that demonstrate his role as Philhellene.

Browning's profound sympathy with all matters Greek motivated most of his activity in later life. He frequently travelled to Greece, lecturing with the skill of one totally at home in the contemporary medium, and he was granted the freedom of the city of Athens. His particular commitment to the continuity of Greek through its 2,000 year-old history is displayed in the introduction to *The Greek World*, a book he edited for Thames & Hudson in 1985. This remains a most persuasive presentation of the idea that modern Greece shares with the ancients certain elements that provide a fundamental continuity. This reinforced his belief in the cause of democratic Greece, which he championed against the military junta and which later led him to advocate popular Greek aspirations for the Parthenon sculptures to be returned to the Acropolis. If this eventually happens, it will be a monument to Robert Browning — to his dedication to the Classics, to Greece and his stubborn opposition to the British Empire.

Robert Browning ... A Communist whose political convictions were hidden beneath intellectual brilliance

Judith Herrin

Robert Browning, classicist, born January 15, 1914; died March 11, 1997

Andy Lipman

Television visionary

ANDY "Four Brains" Lipman, who has died aged 45, was a key member of the generation that is now running British television. He himself could have, and perhaps should have, ended up running an important slab of it as well. But there was a cussed streak in him that made that impossible. He was far more talented than most, but also much less inclined to turn himself into a successful manager. Management was not what Andy thought television should be about.

Television was supposed to be about ideas, change, opportunities, glamour, revolution, style, colour and risks. Television was Andy's circus: he had run away to it in the early 1980s, leaving behind an Oxbridge education as a lawyer. A decade later, he saw lawyers and accountants taking over the circus, and it broke Andy's heart. He had foreseen most of what had happened to television. But not that. He did not want to foresee that.

The Andy I knew was half-Bill Gates, half-Robespierre. The Bill Gates bit of him saw the future of broadcasting half a decade before the rest of us. Andy foresaw a deregulated, multi-channel, multimedia world in which seamless combinations of information technology would be piped directly into every living room. He saw all this early in the 1980s, which in my book earns him the title of a visionary.

As minor proof of this, I offer the fact that the proposal he submitted to Channel 4 for the programme that became *The Media Show*, was almost certainly the first proposal ever submitted to Channel 4 written on a computer. Everywhere else in the media, the word-processing revolution was still several years away. And Channel Four itself was entirely a product of the typewriter and film age. (It still is). But Andy believed in computers and video. According to those who saw it, his first computer was a huge, ungainly, pioneering thing, consisting of four electronic brains wired, somehow, into one.

Just as he had foreseen the importance of new technology, (and was extremely dismissive of those, like me, who didn't) so he grasped earlier than others the growing power of that many-orificed monster we now describe disparagingly as the media. *The Media Show* was one of the defining television programmes of the 1980s. It looked different from other shows. It believed in electronics. In Muriel Grey, it had the first and best of the modern, lippy presenters. In Michael Jackson, its first producer, it gave us a media-genius who went on to transform BBC2 and is now transforming BBC1. And in its fascination with the amoebic growth of media, it gave us a global prognosis that we ignored at our peril.

Andy used to complain to me furiously about how Channel 4, as the newest of the big television players, should have been the most active in the multi-media revolution, but was actually the slowest. This was his Robespierre side, the ranting pain in the neck, who would spend the first 55 minutes of every one-hour meeting telling you what you were doing wrong and the last five minutes refusing to change a single comma of his own plans. Heavens, he was stubborn.

According to Channel 4 legend, Andy insisted on being paid in cash for that first *Media Show* development: he did not trust the new channel's cheques. At Oxford, he had involved himself in radical theatre and gay politics, when he should have been studying to become Perry Mason. The low-budget establishment-kicking video with which he proclaimed his arrival in the media world, *Framed Youth*, consisted entirely of coming-out stories, and reviewers were amazed at how funny it was. *Framed Youth* won the Grierson Award, and proved that sexual politics, tackled with wit, can be memorably entertaining.

Lipman ... half-Bill Gates, half-Robespierre

When I became head of arts at Channel 4, I asked him to create a show that tackled antiques with wit. I felt it was time for *The Antiques Road Show* to be kicked in the zimmer frame. *For Love or Money* ran for four series, and did pretty well but it wasn't really Andy's world. He was good at desires, but not so good at spelling Heppelwhite. Antiquity, I always felt, was something he was instinctively against.

I watched him growing ill, and unreliable, and it did not come as much of a suprise when he told me he was packing in televiston. You could, however, have knocked me down with a Victorian ostrich hat-feather when I heard he was going to Bath to become a child-minder. Andy did not fade out of television. He turned his back on it, rather contemptuously.

There may be a temptation today to remember him as an under-achiever. But that must be resisted. He watched the television world changing for the worse, and he was not prepared to be a part of that. The fact that he ended up doing less than he could have is an indictment of television, not of Andy Lipman.

Waldemar Januszczak

Andrew Lipman television producer, born January 27, 1952, died March 3, 1997

Terry Nation

The man who invented the Daleks

TERRY NATION, who has died aged 66, was best-known as the creator of the fearsome Daleks, who persecuted Dr Who with cries of "Ex-ter-min-ate!". He was also a highly professional British television and film scriptwriter who, like several others, ultimately rather lost his way in the very different climate of California.

Tall, and with a ready intelligence and an ability to come up with ideas without windy script conferences, he took umbrage in the 1960s when, after the animated dustbins with croaky voices had first become popular, he was asked whether the Daleks had made him a rich scriptwriter. He was, he replied, already a rich scriptwriter — from shows such as *The Saint*, *The Avengers* and *The Persuaders*. His belief was that television should "take viewers away from their daily toil".

Romantic notions that writers should suffer poverty and personal unhappiness to feed their art were readily shipwrecked on the facts of Nation's successful, prosperous and happy personal life — in which, at one point, his wife Kate's parents lived with them in their large white Kent mansion while his parents had a house in the grounds. In 1980 when he went to Los Angeles, where he has died of emphysema, to live and work, it was not because opportunities were fading in Britain, but because he saw it, perhaps wrongly, as an expanding opportunity, something he had dreamed about for a long time. None of his projects there took fire with the same intensity as his British creations.

Nation wrote mostly, and quite happily, to order, pounding his typewriter keys from 8.30 am to 6pm, but the Daleks were his own brainchild. They almost missed being conceived. He was writing scripts for Tony Hancock in Nottingham when his agent told him the BBC wanted him to do a children's series. He had never done a children's series before and his first reaction was that the job was rather beneath him. He told his agent he was definitely not interested. Back in London and without a job, he found his agent shrewdly hadn't passed his irate refusal on to the BBC. He was therefore free to accept work for the Dr Who series which the BBC was then devising.

Nation and his wife Kate, by whom he had two children, Rebecca and Joel, were then living in a Hampstead flat, which became a script conference suite as he worked out with her the sort of characters that might fit into such a concept. The Daleks were one idea, though he could never remember how the name came about. He told the BBC about how he saw them and what they sounded like. Raymond Cusick, a designer on the staff, prepared an illustration for the BBC top brass to ponder over, including the mechanical hands and the electronic eye.

The unearthly creatures were not in the first instalment of the cult children's series in 1963. They did not make their gratingly sinister contribution until the fifth episode, but they soon captured the imagination of British children and in the many countries to which the BBC sold the various series. They were credited with saving the show by enhancing the audience from a previously unacceptably modest level.

The Daleks, who Nation thought succeeded because everyone in any audience was always interested in dominating other people, made him better off than most TV scriptwriters could dream of. Two years after the TV series started, the feature film *Dr Who and the Daleks* made him even richer. He took a fee estimated at almost £300,000 for the rights and the script which he wrote himself — a major fortune at the time — and shared with the BBC in the spin-offs, including Dalek dolls and other toy merchandise, which were said to be worth some £50,000 a year.

This was all on top of the fee Nation had already received for BBC TV dramas, 12 episodes of *The Saint* and other work on TV series — which paid better than the work he had done previously writing comedy routines for Hancock, Harry Worth, Peter Sellers and Frankie Howerd. And it was only 10 years since Terry Nation had, at 22, come to London from Cardiff where his father had just given up the furniture factory for which Terry had acted as travelling salesman after leaving school.

Nation came to London carrying a satchel full of the jokes written by himself which he hoped he could use as a stand-up comedian. Though he did have many of the necessary attributes — he was certainly no blushing violet — his efforts to get work in that quarter quickly foundered. In four auditions he found the audience totally unresponsive — he was told the jokes were fine, it was just that he himself was not funny. He decided that his future almost certainly lay in his pen rather than his stage persona.

His eye went straight to the most celebrated comedy programme of that time, the BBC's *Goon Show*, and he asked its most anarchic member, Spike Milligan, if he could write for it. Milligan, badgered for scripts by many shows, agreed, gave him £10 because he thought he looked half-starved, asked him to write a Goon Show and set him off on his career writing for comedians and then TV series.

After the success of Dr Who, Nation branched out, as he saw it, by writing more as he wanted to, including the book *Rebecca's World*, named after his daughter, *The Survivors* television series about those who escape the end of the world, and *Blake's Seven*.

When he went to Los Angeles with his family in 1980, it was in the hope of reproducing his success on a larger canvas. To some extent he achieved this, since the scriptwriting fees from a succession of Hollywood studios were handsome and supported a handsome lifestyle. He also acted as a consultant on Steven Spielberg's Dr Who feature film and became a well-known figure on the Californian media circuit. He remained a craftsman who could devise an arresting storyline, but did not create anything nearly as memorable as those horrible Daleks.

Nation and his creations ... he also wrote for the Goons and Blake's Seven FRANK MARTIN

Dennis Barker

Terry Nation, scriptwriter, born August 1930; died March 9, 1997

Letters

Robert Hall writes: Michael Tooby's obituary of William Gear *(March 3)* rightly paid tribute to his role as one of the few British painters active in the post-war European avant-garde, in particular with the COBRA group. This was not, however, a unique position for as British an artist as Stephen Gilbert also exhibited with the group in 1948/9. Gilbert is not, as described, an Irish artist, but actually born — like Gear — in Fife, where his father was serving as a naval officer. Although Gilbert lived for periods in Ireland he has always regarded himself as English, although resident for many years in Paris and still active as an artist at the age of 87. Both artists are represented in the Museum of Modern Art, Amstelveen, Holland.

Uri Geller writes: Edgar Mitchell, referred to by Christopher Hawtree in his obituary of Thelma Moss *(February 27)* was the sixth man to walk on the moon, not the second. He is still alive and living in Florida.

Jackdaw

X-Files

POPULAR minister Gene Preston left Hong Kong's Union Church in August last year for the United States.

He found himself called back to the territory a few weeks ago to start a new venture, to be known as the Community Church of Hong Kong.

Recently he received a donation in the form of $600 from former Hong Kong resident Louise James, now living in Colorado. The money, she said, was the last bit of cash in her old Bank of China account. But this is the weird bit. She gave the same bit of money in 1995 to Pastor Gene when he was at Union Church. She found it had mysteriously reappeared in 1996, so she donated it to Mother's Choice. In 1997, it again popped up in her account, so she is giving it away a third time. "A modern day equivalent to the story of the loaves and the fishes," Louise said.

Biblical connotations in the South China Morning Post.

Ad fumble

FRENCH, fine. German, no problem. But what on earth .. "GWM WLTM BND", "N/Sc EC F seeks US MBA". Can someone please help! I need a translator. These types of ads seem to be written in a completely alien language. All I ask is can someone please tell the rest of us what you're going on about. I'm sure I'm not the only one who thought "WE" stood for well-educated.

GSOH — good sense of humour
ALAWP — all letters answered with photo
BND — boy next door
GWM — gay white female
GBF — gay black female
MBA — mutally beneficial arrangement
N/Sc — non-scene
SA — straight-acting

The Pink Paper *gives a brief guide to acronyms to avoid some seriously embarrassing misunderstandings.*

Broken dreams

THE gritty BBC series *Casualty* may be a provocative and tear-jerking drama, but it could also be eliciting a more dubious emotional response from certain sections of its audience. This indication comes from Japan, where a growing band of men claim to be excited by the sight of women dressed up to look like accident victims.

The fetish has spurred French photographer Romain Slocombe to trawl the back streets of Tokyo looking for willing models to fill his book on the subject, *City of the Broken Dolls*. The book features women posing in slings, neck braces and bandages, and has already been a hit in the Far East.

"Sex to the Japanese is not loaded with guilt," says Romain. "they also have a long tradition of releasing primal energy by getting drunk and chasing women. It has given birth to a very colourful culture.

"The oriental world has been very enthusiastic about my work, proving that my vision is close to their private worlds. Whereas in Europe everyone tries to intellectualise the images because they find them strange."

Quite why these men take a fancy to girls sporting surgical equipment is unclear, but Romain does at least think it unlikely they'll spend their days prowling the cancer ward checking out incontinent old ladies about to breathe their last.

"Hospitals aren't that sexy," he admits. "But I suppose what I'm trying to create with my pictures is the ideal hospital."

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Emily Sheffield

Birthdays

Valerie Amos, former chief executive, Equal Opportunities Commission, 43; **Lord (Gordon) Borrie, QC**, chairman, Labour's Commission on Social Justice, 66; **Jane Bown**, photographer, 72; **Terence Brady**, playwright, novelist and actor, 58; **Joe Bugner**, boxer, 47; **Sir Terence Burns**, economist, permanent secretary to the Treasury, 53; **Sir Michael Checkland**, former director-general, BBC, 61; **Christopher Gable**, actor, 57; **Howell James**, political secretary to the Prime Minister, 43; **Sir Robert Mark**, former commissioner, Metropolitan Police, 80; **Dr David Peace**, glass engraver, 82; **Neil Sedaka**, songwriter and singer, 58; **Jim Slater**, financier, columnist, 68; **Peter Viggers**, Conservative MP, 59.

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Union busters at Coke plant, page 12

Tomorrow: Media blitz over NatWest traders

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
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Finance Guardian

Kvaerner loses MoD order

Clyde shipyard future in doubt

Martyn Halsall, Northern Industrial Correspondent

THE future of the Kvaerner Govan shipyard on the Clyde, and its workforce of 1,300, was plunged into doubt last night with confirmation that a £200 million Ministry of Defence order for two Royal Navy oil tankers was to be placed with a rival yard.

The work will be carried out by VSEL, now owned by GEC Marine, at its Barrow-in-Furness yard in Cumbria. Ironically, the two rival companies are just completing a joint venture, for a helicopter landing craft. That contract was won in competition against Swan Hunter, which swiftly plunged into receivership when it lost the order.

Kvaerner warned two weeks ago it was "likely to close the yard" if it failed to win the crucial contract.

But the MoD's decision prompted a broader crisis for the Scottish secretary Michael Forsyth, amid Labour claims more than 5,000 associated jobs could be at risk.

Political controversy will concentrate on claims that the order creates an effective monopoly for VSEL as a builder of large ships for the MOD, torpedoing government competition policy.

GEC Marine has also been selected to build the Navy's new Batch 2 Trafalgar class attack submarines but there have been reports of disagreements with the MoD over the price of the vessels.

One report last night suggested that, with GEC asking £700 million more for the submarines than the MOD was prepared to pay, the company had offered a trade off by bidding a much lower price for the oil vessels.

Sigbjorn Ellingsen, Kvaerner's managing director, last night warned that up to 1,000 jobs would be lost at the yard by the end of the year, leaving just a skeleton staff at one of the four remaining yards on the Clyde.

The company had previously put 500 of the workforce on notice that their jobs would go this year if the order was lost and warned last night that redundancies would begin to take effect from May or June. The yard has two ships under construction but the first, a satellite launcher, will be finished this summer, and the second, a chemical tanker, next March.

George Robertson, shadow Scottish secretary, said: "This is a bitter blow for Kvaerner and the people of Govan. It is also a humiliation for Michael Forsyth, who has lost yet another battle in the Cabinet."

Mr Forsyth had lobbied Cabinet colleagues on Tuesday to secure at least part of the order for Scotland. But Defence Secretary Michael Portillo won support from John Major to go for the cheapest option.

Campbell Christie, general secretary of the Scottish TUC, said the trade union movement was "deeply concerned over Michael Forsyth's failure to impress on Cabinet colleagues the importance of this MOD order".

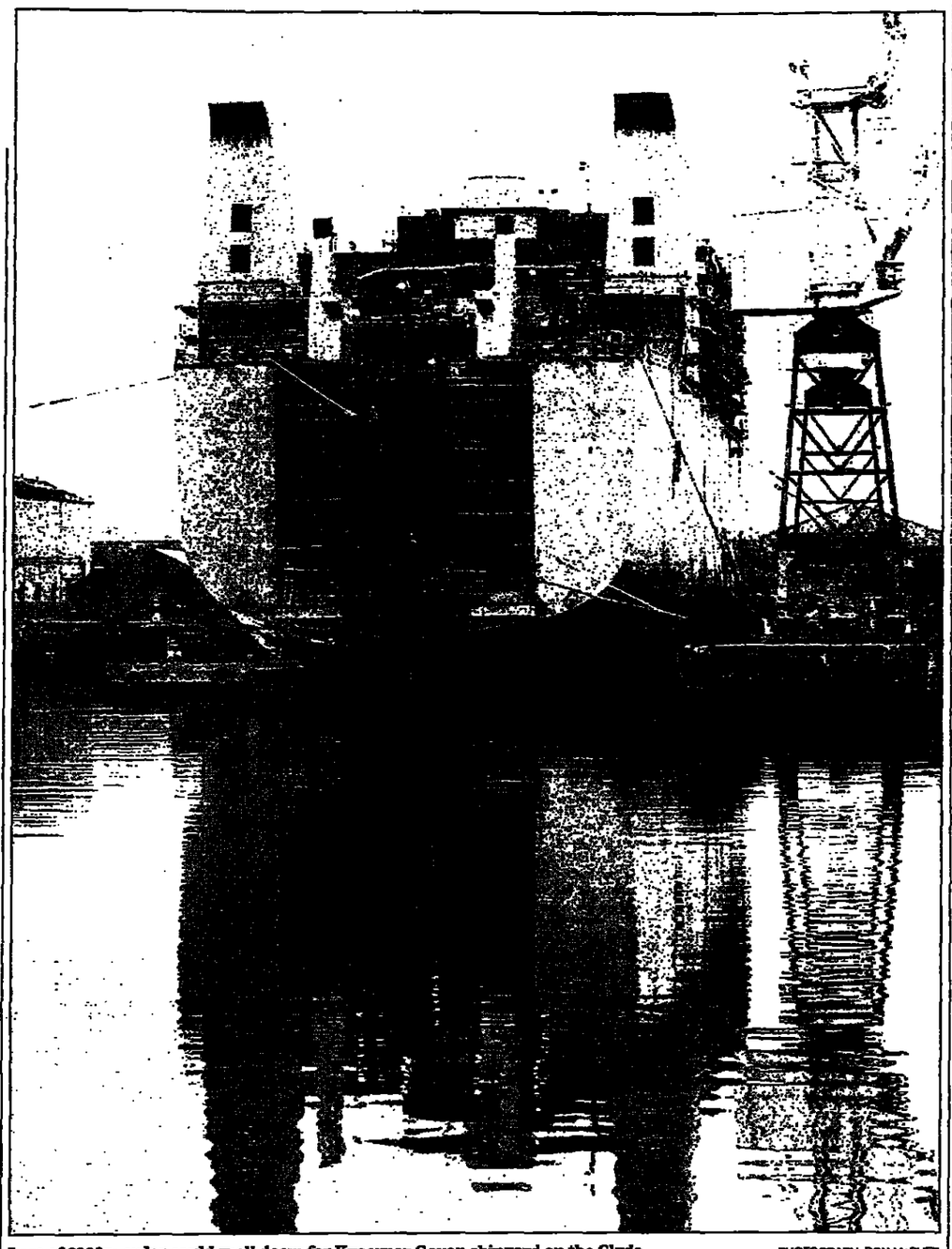
He said: "We are concerned that their (VSEL's) successful bid was a 'loss leader' designed to increase the company's share of the defence market by knocking out a competitor."

Mr Christie backed a call by Ian Davidson, Labour MP for Glasgow Govan, for a National Audit Inquiry into the relationship between the new contract and other MOD contracts awarded to VSEL. "We will now be pressing Scottish Office ministers for an urgent meeting to discuss the future of the Govan yard."

Mr Davidson said the order had been placed unfairly because GEC lumped together the price for the oil ships with the four nuclear submarines it was building for the MOD.

Mr Ellingsen said the lost order was a "severe blow" for the yard, where management and unions were working together to secure its future.

In Cumbria, the order was greeted with jubilation, amid claims that it would guarantee 900 of the 5,000 jobs at VSEL for the next four years, and consolidate the Trident submarine-building yard's re-emergence as a major surface shipbuilder.



Loss of £200m order could spell doom for Kvaerner Govan shipyard on the Clyde PHOTOGRAPH: DON McPHEE

Warburg profit up as deal blunder costs only £5m

Julia Finch

BOOMING financial markets pushed profits at two of the City's top investment banks sharply ahead last year. Schroders recorded growth of 21 per cent to £289 million, while SBC Warburg unveiled net profits up 55 per cent to almost £350 million.

Warburg's results came as it emerged the bank was under investigation by City watchdog the Securities and Futures Authority over a £300 million sale of equities.

The bank handled a share sale on behalf of Kleinwort European Privatisation Investment Trust on October 30 last year which resulted in collapsing prices. It has made up the shortfall to the client, understood to be less than £5 million but two staff have left and others disciplined.

Earnings per share at Schroders, which is now the UK's leading independent merchant bank, rose 29 per cent and the dividend was hoisted 25 per cent to 20p.

The bank achieved its record result despite a 31 per cent or £109 million increase in staff costs. The number of employees rose by 10 per cent, but the bulk of the increase was down to inflation-related pay awards and hefty rises in annual bonuses. The average increase in bonus at the bank was £45,000.

Chairman Win Bischoff made a thinly veiled reference to the recent NatWest debacle and concern over the risks to investment banks that a rogue trader can pose. He said Schroders was "reviewing and updating" its internal controls system.

Schroders' profit is split almost 50-50 between investment banking and asset management, and funds under management grew by £13.6 billion last year. But director John Govett pointed out that only £3 billion of that improvement had come from market movements, with £10.5 billion from new appointments and existing clients.

It was the first full year that the former SG Warburg has been part of the vast Swiss Bank Corporation, and SBC's annual financial statement showed that the Warburg division had achieved "healthy gains" of 20 per cent or more in each of its business areas.

SBC Warburg clocked up a 65 per cent increase in foreign exchange revenues and Schroders said its operations were firmly in the black, unlike many rivals.

Warburg also recorded a 31 per cent increase in revenue in its equity division, which is cashing in on privatisations across Europe.

Options scandal report to be released today

NATWEST Markets is today expected to reveal the results of its preliminary investigation into the £50 million options scandal which led to the suspension of senior trader Neil Dodgson, *writes Lisa Buckingham*.

It also prompted the resignation of trader Kyriacos Papouis from Bear Stearns, which he joined after leaving NWM's interest rate options team last year.

The report, which will be scrutinised by the Bank of England and the Securities and Futures Authority, will seek to improve confidence in the investment bank's surpervisory systems and reassure the market that the £50 million provision for losses will be adequate.

A press and marketing blitz was last night being organised to mend the image of the bank.

NatWest, which has been revising its bonus arrangements to reduce the possibility that traders will take too many risks, is expected to stress that its investigation has not been completed and the future of Mr Dodgson not yet decided.

Notebook

Please show a little reserve

Edited by Alex Brummer

THE Schroders results suggest that despite BZW's struggles and NatWest Markets' spot of bother in derivatives, UK investment banking has not yet given up the ghost in the face of the rampant US houses. In fact Schroders' success in the last six months of 1996 even surprised its own board following a rather cautious trading statement at the half-way mark.

What is fascinating about the final outcome is that fund management — increasingly the glamour end of investment banking — was the main contributor, both in terms of profits generated (£132 million) and the rate of increase.

Schroders was not alone. Its old rival SBC Warburg — now part of Swiss Bank Corporation, the third of the big Swiss banks to announce losses in the last financial year — also appears to be doing well under its new owners, with profits up strongly at £381 million. However, its reputation will not be helped by disclosures about the Securities and Futures Authority's investigation into losses on a £300 million European share portfolio.

One of the great causes of instability in the investment banking sector is the star system operated by many houses, and the unsustainable bonus structures, about which the Bank of England has been warning with increasing intensity.

In Schroders' case there can be little doubt that it is creating potential trouble for itself.

First, it notes in its statement that employee costs have been ratcheted up by "competitive market conditions for staff", which suggests it has not shown the moral courage to resist the trend poisoning the financial services industry.

Secondly, it has willingly raised its bonuses to employees by £45 million in the last financial year, despite the warning bells sounded by overgenerous incentives at a range of other organisations from Barings to Morgan Grenfell Asset Management.

It seems that, as a result of the management's failure to exercise proper control over bonus structures, the average earnings of all Schroders employees will be £90,000 a year. This from a company which assures shareholders that it remains "highly conscious of the need to control expenses".

What Schroders and other investment houses should be doing is preparing for the next, inevitable, downturn in the economic cycle and in the markets.

The bank says it is doing this by improving systems: for that it should be applauded. It should also consider whether it might be better to increase its own reserves, rather than those of its employees, if it wants to remain a forceful and independent finance house.

Bank speak

BY ALL accounts the Japanese news agency Jiji was rather over exuberant in its interpretation of remarks by the Bank of England's deputy governor, Howard Davies, in Tokyo overnight. In the first instance, it had Mr Davies raising base rates by between one-quarter and one percentage point, and then had the deputy governor talking down the sterling/mark exchange rate. In both cases Threadneedle Street found it necessary to clarify the situation.

The critical point is that neither report was without plausibility. Even though there is no way that Mr Davies would talk up interest rates quite so publicly, especially overseas, the likelihood is that, after the election, short-term rates will be raised. The assumption has been that a quarter or half point would do the trick in ensuring the inflation target is met over the medium term — but if, for instance, credit and the housing market is over-buoyant, then a bigger slug might be necessary.

As for the pound, it is uncomfortable at present rates. It has made policy making more complex, as the Governor, Eddie George, explained in Liverpool last night. In particular, it is damaging exporters' profits and the trade balance. A lower pound would be welcome. The encouraging thing is that the Far Eastern markets at least seemed to recognise this.

Labour caution

THE Labour Party is understandably terrified of upsetting business voters. But running away from concepts such as stakeholding seems to deny any role for government which might smack of intervention.

There are areas outside the core of economic and labour market management where governments must act. That is accepted by many senior business people. Indeed, there are many areas where businesses would love government to step in and either lay down the law or help establish voluntary systems.

The advantages of "stakeholding", in one form or another, have almost become received wisdom. Just about all companies want to be inclusive and caring. But this cannot happen while even the most caring public company directors and institutions are trapped in a financial system which demands short-term performance.

Some form of change to company law or the tax system is required to help such people escape the financial treadmill. Similarly, on social issues affecting business, companies need government to help develop rules and regulations on environmental action, social auditing and ethical trading.

Stop stalling on debt relief, IMF is told

Charlotte Denny

THE cross-party Treasury select committee of MPs yesterday urged the International Monetary Fund to stop dragging its feet on debt relief for the world's poorest countries, and called for greater accountability from the Fund.

The committee gave strong backing to Chancellor Kenneth Clarke, one of the prime movers of the £5.2 billion debt restructuring package for the most deeply indebted countries, which was endorsed by the IMF last September. It commits the Fund to extending the period of loans and reducing interest rates.

The select committee members were concerned about the lack of progress in naming the first countries to benefit and accused the IMF of "prevarication" on the issue. Mr Clarke first proposed his initiative two years ago and the committee said there was a danger it could begin to lose impetus: "Debt relief for the most heavily indebted countries must not be allowed to founder."

The select committee urged the Chancellor to seek from the IMF a list of eligible countries and a timescale for helping them.

Part of the problem with establishing eligibility, according to the report, relates to the strict conditions beneficiary countries must meet. The requirement for countries to participate in World Bank or IMF programmes for six years disqualifies some of the poorest countries.

The committee called on the IMF to sell some of its gold reserves to raise money for the project, a proposal that has been held up by opposition from IMF members including Germany.

The MPs also proposed measures to make the IMF more accountable, and requested an annual report from the UK's IMF representative.

Labour's Overseas Development spokesperson Clare Short said: "It is vital that these funds be properly accounted for."

Labour bulls spoil lunch in the City

PAUL MURPHY tests liberty, fraternity and equities claim

BY YESTERDAY lunchtime, the "shock" findings of an academic study suggesting Labour is good news for share prices had still to register in most City bars.

"This country is history. Just sell it. Get rid of it," said one 40-something market maker at a Swiss-owned investment bank, considering the prospect of the Tories losing office.

Yes, the trader could remember the market under Labour and he did not recollect it feeling quite as good as Professor Kevin Keasey of Leeds University Business School appears to be suggesting. "Inflation is not good for stock markets, full stop."

But in a paper entitled Share Prices under Tory and Labour Governments in the Post-1945 UK, Prof Keasey and two colleagues, Robert Hudson and Mike Dempsey, conclude: "There is no statistically significant evidence to suggest that the stock market has performed better in either nominal or real terms under Tory governments".

The findings were seized upon by Labour's campaigns spokesman, Brian Wilson, who said: "This analysis creates a proper perspective from which Tory scare stories can be viewed. The stock markets' long-term growth will continue with a new Labour government."

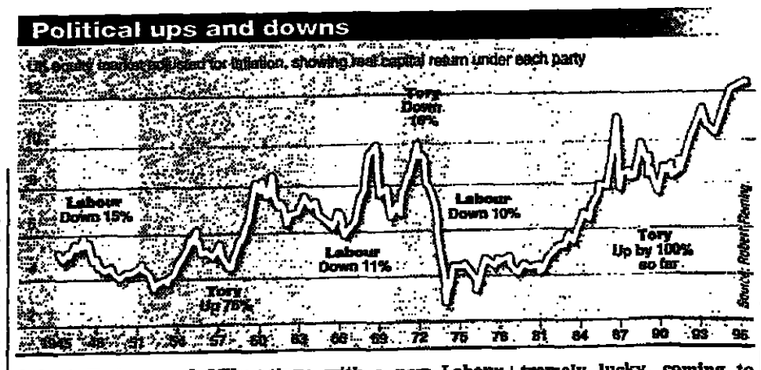
Within the Square Mile, there are quite a few analysts who monitor how share prices have done in the past — such as under different colours of government — in the hope of predicting how they will move in the future.

"I think Mr Wilson is being seriously cheeky," said Nick Glydon, a technical analyst at merchant bank Robert Fleming. "The Government has been extremely lucky, coming to power in 1979 just as the biggest bull market in history was getting going. But in real terms the figures are very clear."

Mr Glydon puts the real loss suffered by investors during the post-war spells of Labour government at 15 per cent from 1945-51, 11 per cent from 1964-70 and 10 per cent from 1974-79. Prof Keasey reaches a less dramatic average loss of 4.5 per cent in real terms for each Labour year.

Political ups and downs

UK equity market adjusted for inflation, showing real capital return under each party



Faltering factories signal a slowdown

Charlotte Denny

FEARS that Britain's prolonged economic recovery is finally faltering grew yesterday with evidence of only a sluggish growth in manufacturing output in January.

The 0.3 per cent rise in factory production prompted most City analysts to conclude against any short-term rise in interest rates, adding to the downward pressure on sterling which fell yesterday below $1.60 and dropped more than two pfennigs against the German mark.

But the Bank of England continued to advocate a slight tightening in monetary policy, with deputy governor Howard Davies reiterating its call for a quarter percentage point increase at a meeting with bankers in Tokyo. Confusion about his reported remarks about the need for increased interest rates and on sterling's "over-valuation" against the mark — subsequently corrected — helped undermine the pound on the foreign exchanges.

Any sustained evidence of a decline in sterling's value would be a relief to manufacturing where, according to the Office for National Statistics, output over the year to January rose by only 1.6 per cent.

ONS officials said there was no sign yet that sectors which rely heavily on export orders were suffering from the relative strength of the pound. But analysts pointed to surveys showing lower order books for exports as evidence that the recovery is unlikely to gather further momentum over the next few months.

TOURIST RATES — BANK SELLS

Australia 1.96	France 8.98	Italy 2,675	Singapore 2.24
Austria 18.78	Germany 2.6775	Malta 0.6020	South Africa 5.93
Belgium 55.05	Greece 422.00	Netherlands 3.0050	Spain 224.75
Canada 2.1385	Hong Kong 12.13	New Zealand 2.2150	Sweden 12.14
Cyprus 0.7950	India 57.53	Norway 10.64	Switzerland 2.30
Denmark 10.24	Ireland 1.0005	Portugal 266.50	Turkey 194,420
Finland 6.09	Israel 5.40	Saudi Arabia 5.92	USA 1.5700

Supplied by NatWest Bank (excluding Indian rupee and Israeli shekel).

Unaccustomed humble pie for Rentokil's Mr 20 Per Cent

OUTLOOK/Ian King sees Sir Clive's embarrassment as a 'buy' signal

WHEN he made his £2.1 billion bid for BET a year ago, Sir Clive Thompson of Rentokil was riding the crest of a wave, his popularity in the City comparable with that of other buccaneering captains of industry.

Much was made of Sir Clive's nickname, "Mr 20 per cent", a tribute to his achievement of producing a 20 per cent improvement in annual profits and earnings for each of the previous 14 years.

John Clark, the BET chairman, appeared hopelessly exposed in the face of a vigorous assault from one of the Square Mile's favourite businessmen.

Yet, in the finest traditions of a hard-fought takeover battle, Mr Clark managed to plant in analysts' minds the suspicion that Rentokil desperately needed BET to keep Sir Clive's proud record intact.

Accordingly, although Rentokil Initial — the name of BET's best known brand having been brought into the company moniker — announced a spectacular jump in pre-tax profits yesterday, all eyes were on the underlying business. The comparison was something of an embarrassment to Sir Clive.

Although headline profits were up by 48 per cent, to £318 million, profit growth in the established Rentokil businesses was less spectacular, rising by 8.8 per cent to £233.4 million in 1996 — proof that Rentokil did indeed need BET badly.

By way of explanation, Sir Clive trotted out a well prepared list of excuses, the main one being that Rentokil's managers had been told to concentrate on incorporating the newly acquired BET businesses than on hitting the magical 20 per cent.

Pointing out that he had not forecast during the bid that he would keep his record intact, Sir Clive said things would have "clearly been better" without the pressure of bedding down BET.

Denying that his management was overstretched, Sir Clive said: "Undoubtedly, our management has come through the eye of the storm, and although I've never been able to predict the future, I'm very optimistic for 1997."

This was not enough to pacify the City, and Rentokil shares fell 43½p to 414½ — wiping £620 million off the company's market value.

There were plenty of other worrying aspects to the figures, not least the impact that sterling's strength is having on profits.

With more than half of profits and turnover coming from outside Britain, Rentokil is highly sensitive to currency swings, perhaps explaining why Sir Clive so eagerly signed this week's letter to the Financial Times from leading business figures calling for an end to British isolation in Europe.

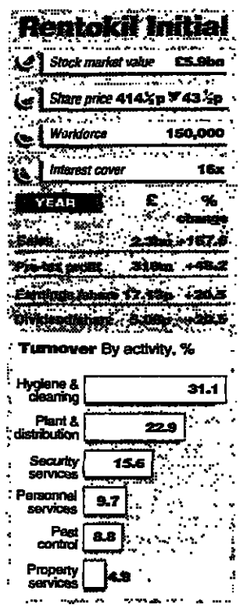
Although the sterling effect cost Rentokil only £3.4 million last year, Sir Clive admitted that as much as 5 per cent of profits could be wiped out in 1997.

There have also been setbacks in some of the established businesses, notably pest control, the activity for which Rentokil is still best known and where profits actually went into reverse in the United Kingdom.

Rentokil's prospects are by no means bad, however, and Sir Clive — who will have felt yesterday's share collapse keenly — is not a man to sit back.

Outsiders can expect to see a string of disposals, some in the next few weeks, while insiders can expect to see the 20 per cent target looming larger than ever this year.

Rentokil remains a quality company, and, with the shares battered yesterday, now could be a good time to buy.



There's gold in them there jeans

Just $1.25 when new and built to last a hundred years, this pair of Levi's will patch historical gaps in the firm's museum PHOTOGRAPH: DITH PRAN

Mark Tran in New York

IT may seem excessive to pay $25,000 (£15,720) for a tatty pair of jeans, but the pair pictured to the left are no ordinary Levi's. They date back to 1886 and are believed to be one of the two oldest pairs left.

They were discovered last November in an inactive coal mine in Colorado and sold for $10,000 to someone who trades in old jeans. He sold them to another investor for $15,000, who trousered $20,000 by selling them to Seth Weisser and Gerard Malone, owners of a store called What Comes Around Goes Around, in SoHo, Manhattan.

Mr Weisser, who became interested in denim as a collector's item after opening the shop four years ago, contacted Levi Strauss in San Francisco. "I called Levi's and overnighted them pictures. They seemed overwhelmed and would have paid $40,000," he said.

Levi's has its own museum and Lynn Downey, the company historian did not hesitate. "I knew this would be a treasure that everyone in the company would want us to have, so there was no question of not paying one of the highest sums ever for a pair of old jeans," she said.

The company has another pair almost as old, but in poor condition. Apart from a hole in the left pocket and frayed edges at the turnups, the jeans are in remarkably good condition for their age.

Ms Downey was able to date them by the leather patch added in 1886 and the single back pocket. A second pocket was added in 1902. "One reason these jeans are so important is that we lost everything in the 1906 earthquake and the first 50 years of our history were destroyed," she said.

News in brief

Mobile phone firms to rewrite contracts

THE Office of Fair Trading yesterday forced seven mobile phone companies to improve their contract terms. Noting that airtime contracts had attracted more complaints than any other type of contract, the OFT warned that it was "time to cut the jargon and use plain English".

Among the changes agreed are the removal of disconnection charges, the right to end a contract if prices go up, and shorter periods for customers wanting to quit. BT, Cellnet, Motorola and UniqueAir have introduced new contracts, while Vodafone subsidiaries Peoples Phone and Astec Communications, as well as One-2-One, said they would introduce new contracts and not enforce unfair terms. — *Lina Saigol*

Oil gushes for BP

BP IS to increase oil production by two-thirds within 10 years following the discovery of two large fields. Chief executive John Browne yesterday said daily production from the Gulf of Mexico and South America would rise to 250,000 barrels. Added to new output from Asia and Africa, and steady output from Alaska and the North Sea, BP's production would rise to 2.5 million barrels of oil and gas a day from the present 1.5 million.

Mr Browne said BP's target of delivering an extra £950 million a year in underlying income should be delivered a year ahead of the end-of-decade target. The European joint venture with Mobil on marketing and refining will deliver benefits of more than £310 million a year. — *Chris Barrie*

Satellite broadcasters shuffle

GRANADA, Pearson and Pathé, the main shareholders in BSB Holdings, yesterday sold 1.1 per cent of satellite broadcaster BSkyB *for about £125 million. The deal means cuts in BSBH's* stake in BSkyB to 12.8 per cent. Proceeds from the disposal, with some tax losses, will be used by the three groups to buy out the 6 per cent of BSBH they do not already own. — *Lisa Buckingham*

Reed on the prowl

REED Elsevier, the Anglo-Dutch publisher, yesterday paraded £2.2 billion of financial firepower which it said was available for a blockbuster takeover. But the company — which spent £316 million on takeovers last year and has committed £150 million in the first two months of 1997 — denied it had a huge target in its sights. — *Lisa Buckingham*

Brokers get together

US group Marsh & McLennan re-established itself yesterday as the world's biggest insurance broker with the announcement that it is taking over rival US firm Johnson & Higgins in a $1.8 billion (£1.1 billion) deal. The new-look company will be known as J&H Marsh & McLennan. — *Pauline Springett*

The Coke driver and the Ruby Tuesday bribe

Richard Thomas in Washington

UNION-busting executives at a Florida subsidiary of Coca-Cola Enterprises have been accused of recruiting *agents provocateurs* to break a trade union organisation campaign.

According to federal prosecutors, the vice-president of the Atlanta bottling operation, James Wardlaw, secretly met a truck driver at Ruby Tuesday's, a downmarket suburban restaurant, and agreed to pay him $10,000 to persuade fellow workers to vote against union representation in 1994. The Bakers, Confectionery and Tobacco workers' union lost the subsequent poll but the driver confessed to the authorities.

Mr Wardlaw and branch manager Eric Turpin have each been charged on five counts of conspiracy and bribery, after passing the cash to Jeffrey Wright at shops and bars.

Police claim that on one occasion, after a clandestine transfer of cash in a grocery store, Mr Wright realised the episode had been videotaped and bribed the manager to hand over the cassette. With the Labour Party committed to US-style ballots for a legal right to union recognition, such dirty tricks campaigns by anti-union managements could become common in Britain.

The American labour movement is conducting an aggressive campaign, using young politically-committed activists to recruit in the workplace to stem declining union membership. Only one in seven US workers is in a union, compared to a third in the UK.

Coca-Cola Enterprises, the worldwide bottling operation in which the drinks manufacturer has a majority holding and which owns the Atlanta Coca-Cola Bottling Company, is "extremely disappointed and deeply distressed" at the indictments. The two men have been given paid leave to mount their defence. If found guilty, the pair face fines of up to $300,000 and up to 25 years behind bars.

But the scheme to foment oppostion to trade unions — which also involved promoting Mr Wright from driver to sales representative and giving him a $2,500 pay rise — is simply a high-profile version of everyday attempts by managers in the US to subvert laws allowing collective representation if the majority of workers want it, according to union activists.

● Union leaders representing more than 2,000 Heinz workers in Britain have been told that their factories may close unless they agree to no-strike deals and a sweeping cost-cutting programme.

The highly profitable US-owned multinational is reported to be planning a 6 per cent cut in its 43,000 worldwide workforce in a "global reorganisation" to be announced by the new Heinz president William Johnson in San Francisco tomorrow.

Brian Revell, the Transport and General Workers' Union official representing Heinz workers, said they were ready to discuss costs, but not the right to strike, which was a fundamental freedom.

South Africa relaxes rules on rand as it seeks world role

Ruaridh Nicholl in Johannesburg

TREVOR Manuel, South Africa's first non-white finance minister, relaxed foreign exchange restrictions yesterday to demonstrate his country's commitment to joining the global economy.

Mr Manuel, in his first budget speech to the Cape Town parliament, continued to tread the conservative path that has carried Nelson Mandela's government since its historic election in 1994.

While shifting some expenditure to alleviate poverty, the government remained focused on attracting the foreign investment necessary to stave off social meltdown.

"This budget demands substantially more austerity from government than many of its forerunners yet does not sacrifice the fundamental objective of transformation," Mr Manuel said.

South African companies will be allowed to remove 30 million rand (£4 million) to invest in factories abroad, but Mr Manuel left untouched apartheid-era restrictions that stop people who leave South Africa taking their investments with them. He continued to deny pension funds the right to invest abroad.

Siphoning 667.7 million rand from the defence budget, Mr Manuel increased spending on the police and doubled the housing programme, one of the ANC's main election promises. The shortfall would be dealt with by making government more efficient.

Mr Manuel predicted 2.5 per cent growth for 1997, which he said would be a year of consolidation.

The budget pleased analysts and the rand strengthened against the pound and dollar. "It says the government is serious about sticking to its policies," said Hennie Coetzee of KPMG South Africa.

MP's call for tougher curbs as town centres come under threat

Roger Cowe

CAR parking at out-of-town shopping venues should be taxed, according to MPs who want to safeguard the role of town centres for leisure and shopping.

The all-party parliamentary Environment Committee — which prompted the Government to impose tougher planning guidelines for out-of-town shopping malls with its 1994 report — said yesterday that developers should pay the environmental cost of encouraging greater car use.

This could come either through a levy or by allowing local authorities to assess car parks for business rates.

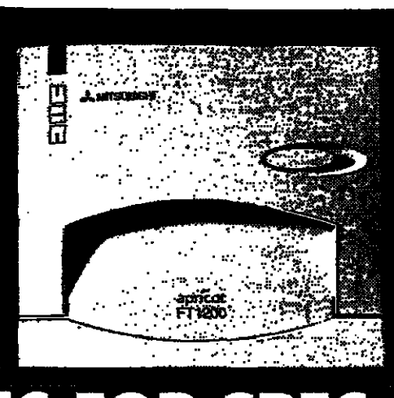
The call was attacked by the Automobile Association, who said it was not the best way to boost town centres.

Committee chairman Andrew Bennett, the Labour MP for Denton and Reddish, said of the rash of greenfield leisure complexes: "These represent the latest threat to existing town centres as places where people not only shop but work and relax. I am concerned that where one function of a centre is allowed to die, others may follow.

"I was alarmed to learn of the pace and scale of new leisure developments on out-of-town sites. Most appear to be multiplex cinemas sometimes associated with bowling alleys and food outlets."

The MPs said a further 50 "megaplex" cinemas, with up to 30 screens each and more than 1,000 parking spaces, could be developed over the coming years.

The committee said the threat from shopping centres had receded. It praised the "sequential approach" to judging applications for out-of-town retail developments, which followed the committee's report two years ago and has stemmed the rush of new shopping malls.



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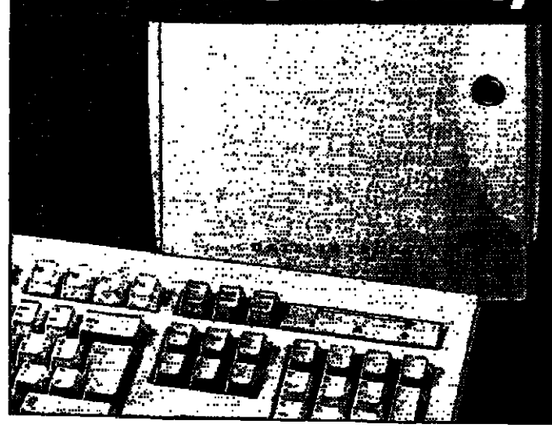

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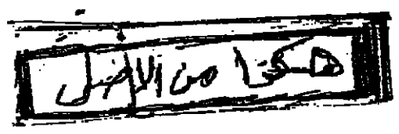


CHELTENHAM FESTIVAL: FINAL DAY

Coome Hill can prove the cream of the crop

Ron Cox expects the Gold Cup to be carried off by a dairy farmer from Cornwall

YOU don't have to be a dairy farmer to train the winner of the Cheltenham Gold Cup, but it helps. Sirrell Griffiths showed how in 1990 when Norton's Coin, at 100-1, floored Toby Tobias and Desert Orchid.

The difference today is that Walter Dennis goes for Gold with a well-fancied runner. Coome Hill, already the winner of the Hennessy at Newbury, is vying for favouritism. He should not let his supporters down.

Like Norton's Coin, Coome Hill has graduated from point-to-points and hunter chases into handicaps, and the Gold Cup beckoned after he turned in a bold display of jumping to beat Unguided Missile at Wincanton last month.

That form received a timely boost when Hanakham, who was over 11 lengths away third, ran out the decisive winner of yesterday's Royal SunAlliance Chase.

Dennis, who combines farming at Bude in Cornwall with the training of a small band of jumpers under permit, is no different to the trainers of today's opposition in that he is concerned about the state of the ground.

But Coome Hill has won on firm ground at Cheltenham and would be unbeaten over fences this season but for an uncharacteristic early blunder at Sandown.

Although 6lb worse off with Unguided Missile, who made a costly blunder two out at Wincanton, Coome Hill is confidently expected to confirm those placings.

Gordon Richards, trainer of Unguided Missile, went into last year's Gold Cup with the highest hopes for One Man but the trip on soft ground found the grey out. The 11-8 favourite then, One Man is beginning to look value at 8-1 with conditions in his favour this time.

The same cannot be said of Dorans Pride, who has shown all his best form in the mud, and while Danoli will not mind the lively ground his jumping will be put to the test in a race sure to be run at a furious pace.

Dublin Flyer should see to that. He made all to beat Addington Boy, who was getting 10lb, here in January and, like One Man, Tim Forster's 11-year-old has a better chance of getting the trip than last year when he weakened rapidly four out and was pulled up two fences later.

Imperial Call, the 1996 winner, will find it difficult to defend his crown after such an interrupted preparation. He stopped very quickly after two out when a well-beaten third behind Danoli at Leopardstown last month.

With Martin Pipe runners popping up all over the place, neither Challenger Du Luc nor Cyborgo can be left out of calculations, although the latter would prefer soft ground.

Nahthen Lad has quietly worked his way into the picture. Steadily brought to peak fitness by Jenny Pitman, he won last season's Sun Alliance Chase by eight lengths from Mr Mulligan and is comparatively lightly-raced.

The ground is a huge factor. If Dorans Pride is allowed to take his chance he may yet come good, but Coome Hill (3.15) is the percentage call. He may be followed home by Nahthen Lad and One Man.

Despite the massive field, White Sea (2.00) looks a worthy favourite for the Triumph Hurdle. She would have beaten Kerawi decisively at Newbury had Charlie Swan not tried to be so clever.

The nap is Embellished (5.40). Brought down at the final flight when close up in last year's Triumph, he figures on a handy mark in the County Hurdle.

Big race line-up

3.15 TOTE GOLD CUP CHASE 3m 2f 110yds

301	111/312	**Addington Boy** (47) G Richards 9-12-0	A Dobbin
		Red and white diamonds, royal blue sleeves, royal blue cap, red diamond	
302	111131/-	**Banjo** (706) D Nicholson 7-12-0	D Bridgwater
		Black, white hoops, black sleeves, white spots	
303	20-2532	**Barton Bank** (47) D Nicholson 11-12-0	D Walsh
		Emerald green, white stars, emerald green cap, white star	
304	23-1F61	**Challenger Du Luc** (35) M Pipe 7-12-0	C Maude
		Royal blue, emerald green sleeves, white cap, emerald green spots	
305	2-111F1	**Coome Hill** (21) W Dennis 8-12-0	J Osborne
		Dark blue, white cross belts, white cap, dark blue star	
306	2/14-111	**Cyborgo** (26) M Pipe 7-12-0	C Swan
		Yellow, maroon cross belts, royal blue sleeves, royal blue and yellow quartered cap	
307	11F1F1	**Danoli** (39) T Foley (Ire) 9-12-0	T Treacy
		Royal blue and white diabolo, white sleeves, royal blue cap, white star	
308	11111F	**Dorans Pride** (28) M Hourigan (Ire) 8-12-0	J P Broderick
		Emerald green, red stars, emerald green cap, red star	
309	11P/S11	**Dublin Flyer** (47) T Forster 11-12-0	B Powell
		Green, yellow sleeves, white cap	
310	1-4121F	**Go Ballistic** (40) J G M O'Shea 8-12-0	M Fitzgerald
		Turquoise and silver diamonds	
311	F111-43	**Imperial Call** (39) F Sutherland (Ire) 8-12-0	C O'Dwyer
		Royal blue and yellow diabolo, yellow sleeves and cap	
312	1112-4F	**Mr Mulligan** (77) N Chance 9-12-0	A P McCoy
		Light blue, black sleeves, red seams, black and light blue quartered cap	
313	121-5P2	**Nahthen Lad** (26) Mrs J Pitman 8-12-0	R Farrant
		White, black stars, white sleeves, black cap	
314	16-1112	**One Man** (36) G Richards 9-12-0	R Dunwoody
		Yellow, red star, yellow sleeves, white armlets, yellow cap, red star	
315	23-1222	**Unguided Missile** (21) G Richards 9-12-0	N Williamson
		Light blue, royal blue triple diamond, diamonds on sleeves and cap	

15 runners

Top Form Tips: Imperial Call 9, Coome Hill 8, One Man 7

Betting: 4-1 Imperial Call, 5-1 Coome Hill, 7-1 Danoli, Dorans Pride, 8-1 One Man, 10-1 Addington Boy, Dublin Flyer, 14-1 Cyborgo, 16-1 Mr Mulligan, Challenger du Luc

FORM GUIDE

IMPERIAL CALL: In touch, led briefly 4 out, weakened from next, 3rd of 8, 22l behind DANOLI (levels) (Leopardstown 3m ch, Gd).

COOME HILL: Led to 4 out, led 3 out, ran on well, beat UNGUIDED MISSILE (gave 6lb), mistake two out, 1½l (Wincanton 3m 1f 110yds ch, Gd).

DORANS PRIDE: Led 7th, clear when fell 2 out in race won by Merry Gale (Thurles 2m 4f ch, Sft).

DANOLI: Jumped well, made all, ran on strongly, beat Jodami 1½l (Leopardstown 3m ch, Gd).

ONE MAN: Led to 4 out, ridden 2 out, unable to quicken, 2nd of 4, 1l behind Strong Promise (Ascot 2m 3f 110yds ch, Gd-Fm). Previously, led run-in, beat BARTON BANK (levels) a head (Cheltenham 3m 1½f ch, Gd-Fm).

DUBLIN FLYER: Made all, ridden and ran on well run-in, beat ADDINGTON BOY (rec 10lb) 2l (Cheltenham 2m 5f hcp ch, Gd).

ADDINGTON BOY: Hit first, tracked leaders, ridden to lead two out, beat Go Universal 6l (Cheltenham 2m 5f hcap ch, Gd-Fm).

CHALLENGER DU LUC: Led final fence, ran on strongly, easily beat Beatson 5l (Wincanton 2m 5f ch, Gd).

CYBORGO: Pressed leaders, led 12th, ran on strongly, beat Buckhouse Boy 9l (Chepstow 3m nov ch, Sft).

GO BALLISTIC: Fell in race won by Dextra Dove (Sandown 3m 110yds hcap ch, Gd). Previously led two out, ran on well, beat UNGUIDED MISSILE (gave 25lb) (Ascot 3m 1f hcap ch, Gd-Fm).

MR MULLIGAN: Fell in race won by ONE MAN (levels) (Kempton 3m ch, Gd-Fm). Previously led seventh, headed 10th, 4th of 7, btn 14l, to Belmont King (Chepstow 3m hcap ch, Gd-Sft).

NAHTHEN LAD: Led until 12th, kept on under pressure, 2nd of 5, btn 6l by Air Shot (Chepstow 2m 3½f ch, Sft).

Rest of the Cheltenham card

2.00 White Sea (nb)
2.35 Pridwell
3.15 Coome Hill
3.55 What A Hand
4.30 Elzoba
5.05 Or Royal
5.40 EMBELLISHED (nap)

Going: Good (good to firm in places). ✦ Denotes blinkers. Figures in brackets after horse's name denote days since latest outing

Channel 4

2.00 ELITE RACING CLUB TRIUMPH HURDLE 4YO 2m 1f £44,560

[illegible]

Channel 4

2.35 BONUSPRINT STAYERS' HURDLE 3m 110yds £62,440

[illegible]

Channel 4

3.55 CHRISTIES FOXHUNTER CHASE CHALLENGE CUP (Amateurs) 3m 2f 110yds

[illegible]

4.30 GRAND ANNUAL CHASE CHALLENGE CUP (HANDICAP) 2m 110yds £28,679

501 D-3172 DANCING PADDY (33) (CD) K Cunningham-Brown 9-12-0 — D Walsh
502 15-0854 KIBREET (40) (CD) P Hobbs 10-11-8 — N Williamson
503 331-434 UNCLE ERNIE (19) (D) J FitzGerald 12-11-4 — G Bradley
504 5-20422 EASTHORPE (33) (CD) Miss H Knight 9-11-3 — J F Titley
505 0211-1F CERTAINLY STRONG (327) (D) (BF) D Nicholson 7-11-1 — R Dunwoody
506 5224-43 TIME WON'T WAIT (47) (D) (BF) R Phillips 8-11-1 — J Railton

[illegible]

5.05 CATHCART CHALLENGE CUP CHASE 2m 5f £32,880

[illegible]

5.40 VINCENT O'BRIEN COUNTY HANDICAP HURDLE 2m 1f £34,815

[illegible]

Results

CHELTENHAM

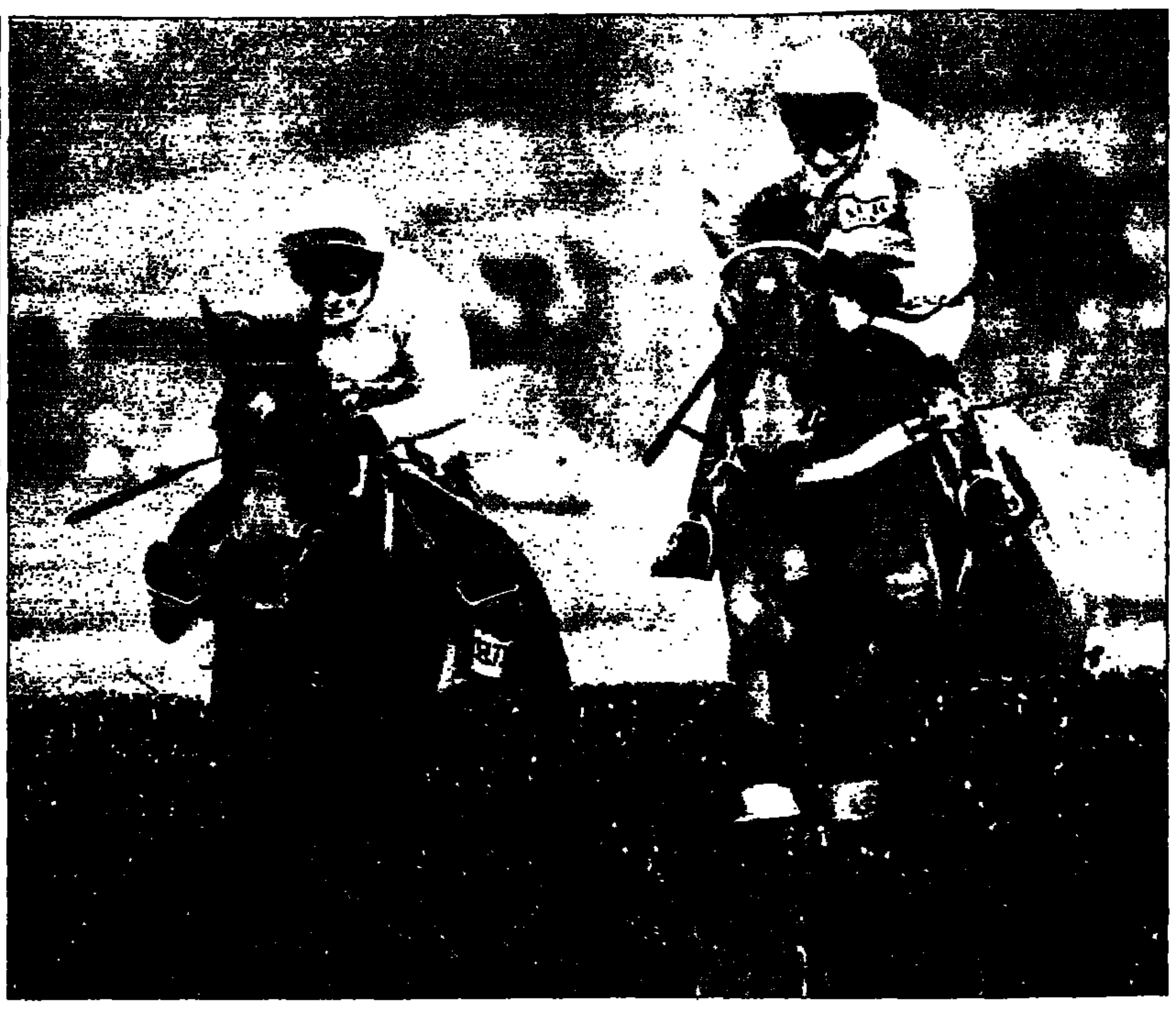
[illegible]

NEWTON ABBOT

[illegible]

HUNTINGDON

[illegible]



Just champion . . . Martha's Son (left) takes the last with Viking Flagship on his way to victory PHOTO: FRANK BARON

Martha's Champion return

Chris Hawkins

MARTHA'S SON, a horse "you could tie up in the High Street and go shopping," brought home the goods in a thriller for the Queen Mother Champion Chase at Cheltenham yesterday when storming up the hill to beat Ask Tom.

As always seems to be the case in this race, three were in the air together at the last and Rodney Farrant, riding his first Festival winner, judged things to perfection on the winner.

Strong Promise was still moving ominously well in front when ploughing through the third last, passing the initiative to Ask Tom and the old war horse Viking Flagship, but neither had an answer to Martha's Son's finish.

"He's the most honest, tough little horse I've ever had," said an emotional Tim Forster, his trainer. "No horse has had a more imperfect preparation and he hasn't really had a run for 18 months after falling at the first at Kempton two weeks ago.

"You could put a five-year-old on him at home but when he gets to a race course he's just explosive. Rodney rode an incredible race."

Talking about well-timed finishes, Charlie Swan must earn the accolade for the coolest man when swooping to land the Royal SunAlliance Hurdle on the heavily backed Istabraq.

The Adrian O'Brien-trained gelding was sent off the 6-5 favourite as a result of a deluge of Irish money, including a few thousand punts of owner J.P. McManus.

"I won't tell you how much I had on but let's say I got back yesterday's losses on Finnegan's Hollow plus a little bit of interest," commented the master punter.

McManus has now had eight winners at the Festival over the years — seven of them on the Wednesday.

Martin Pipe continued to defy logic by saddling the first two home in the 28 runner Coral Cup Handicap where Australian jockey Jamie Evans got Big Strand up to short-head Allegation and Tony McCoy.

Evans, three times champion in his own country, broke a leg in a first race fall at the Festival last year so reckoned this was only justice.

Richard Dunwoody's luck changed at last — his first race mount Agistment took a fatal fall — when he won the Royal SunAlliance Chase on Hanakham despite missing out the final fence.

Lingfield

2.15 Czarna
2.45 In The Money
3.20 Invocation
3.50 Mellors
4.20 Renown
4.50 Bowcliffe Grange
5.25 Ki Chi Saga

Draw: Low numbers favoured. Going: Standard. ✦ Denotes blinkers.

2.15 RED MINTY LITIGATORS AMATEUR RIDERS' HANDICAP (Div I) 1m £3,090

[illegible]

2.45 RED MINTY SOLICITORS HANDICAP 1m 4f £3,945

[illegible]

3.20 RED MINTY LIBEL & SLANDER CLAIMING STAKES 7f £2,880

[illegible]

3.50 COST AUDITING CLAIMING STAKES 6f £2,484

[illegible]

4.20 RED MINTY 17TH ANNIVERSARY HANDICAP 1m 2f £3,053

[illegible]

4.50 RED MINTY COMMERCIAL PROPERTY SOLUTIONS HANDICAP 6f £2,274

[illegible]

5.25 RED MINTY LITIGATORS AMATEUR RIDERS' HANDICAP (Div II) 1m £3,090

1 00-0201 KI CHI SAGA (9) (5ex) (CD) [illegible]
2 604-164 RATTA SUNSHINE (26) (CD) G L Moore 7-11-7 — Mrs J Moore (5) 4
3 0-54001 EASTLEIGH (14) (CD) R Hollinshead 8-10-13 — K Goble 5
4 200236 STATISTICIAN (9) John Berry 5-10-11 — G McEntee (7) 3✦
5 4-12335 BOLD HABIT (8) (CD) J Pearce 12-10-10 — Mrs L Pearce 3
6 0-65031 GADGE (19) (CD) A Bailey 6-10-10 — Miss A L Hutchinson (7) 8
7 646002 PRIVATE FIXTURE (17) (C) D Marks 6-10-7 — T McCarthy 1
8 505000- RETURN TO BRIGHTON (114) (D) J Bradley 5-10-2 — Miss E Jones (5) 6
9 3-03342 DON'T DROP BOMBS (9) (CD) D Thom 8-10-0 — Miss J Feilden 10✦
10 0P000-0 SUSSEX GORSE (17) J Long 6-7-0 — T Waters (7) 9

TOP FORM TIPS: Bold Habit 8, Ki Chi Saga 7, Eastleigh 6

Betting: 7-2 Bold Habit, 9-2 Private Fixture, 5-1 Eastleigh, 6-1 Ki Chi Saga, 7-1 Gadge, Don't Drop Bombs, 8-1 Statistician, 10-1 Return To Brighton — 10 runners

● Blinkered for the first time — CHELTENHAM: 2.00 Pomme Secret; 2.35 Ocean Hawk; 4.30 Elzoba; 5.40 Slew Man. HEXHAM: 3.35 Pennine Pride.

Hexham

2.25 Mill Thyme
3.00 Rallegio
3.35 Off The Bru
4.05 Southern Cross
4.40 Parish
5.15 The Other Man

Going: Good to soft (good in places). ✦ Denotes blinkers.

2.25 MEDALLION LAGER CONDITIONAL JOCKEYS' MARES' ONLY HANDICAP HURDLE

[illegible]

3.00 ANN LEESON NOVICE CHASE 2m 110yds £3,061

[illegible]

3.35 WIN WITH THE TOTE HANDICAP CHASE 4m £4,666

[illegible]

4.05 KEOGHANS NOVICE HURDLE 3m £2,480

[illegible]

4.40 FEDERATION BREWERY HANDICAP CHASE 2m 4f 110yds

[illegible]

5.15 BUCHANAN ALE HANDICAP HURDLE 3m £3,284

[illegible]

Munro wins

ALAN MUNRO, who was banned from riding for a year after blacking out in a fall last March, rode his first winner since returning to action last week when successful on Cash Fortune at Happy Valley, Hong Kong yesterday. Munro got the 6-1 shot home by a head.

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The Guardian Thursday March 13 1997

Soccer

Liverpool in rush to lure Citko

Ian Ross

LIVERPOOL hope to succeed where Blackburn recently failed, by signing the Poland striker Marek Citko, a deal that might precipitate the immediate departure of Stan Collymore to Aston Villa.

Citko, of Widzew Lodz, insisted six weeks ago that he would remain in Poland to pursue a career in the priesthood. But Liverpool have offered Lodz £2.5 million and their package for Citko would increase his salary tenfold. He is expected to fly to Merseyside today for formal talks.

Because Citko would require a work permit, Liverpool must seal the transfer in the next 24 hours if he is to play in the Premiership this season; a permit normally takes two to three weeks to process and the transfer deadline is a fortnight today.

"We are definitely trying to bring someone in before the deadline," Liverpool's manager Roy Evans confirmed yesterday. He sees Citko as the successor to Collymore, who has long been pursued by Villa and may join the Midlands club before the deadline if the clubs can agree a fee.

Les Ferdinand yesterday refused to count himself out of Newcastle's Uefa Cup return in Monaco on Tuesday, even though 24 hours earlier the striker said his hamstring trouble gave him "no chance" of playing.

"I haven't ruled myself out," he said yesterday. "The injury has settled down in the last day or so. I have a chance."

Nottingham Forest have taken their spending to £5.5 million in 72 hours with the £1 million signing of the England Under-21 striker Ian Moore from Tranmere.

Moore, 20, could link with the £4.5 million Pierre van Hooydonk at Liverpool on Saturday, but is more likely to start on the bench.

Leicester have stepped up negotiations to extend their manager Martin O'Neill's contract after his team reached the Coca-Cola Cup final. O'Neill has 15 months to run on his current deal.

Martin Thorpe writes: Alex Ferguson is understood to be flying to Holland on Sunday to make a personal check on the Vitesse Arnhem central defender Ferdi Virklau. Manchester United scouts have watched the player at least five times. United's manager is scheduled to watch the £4 million-rated player against De Graafschap.

Premiership

West Ham 3
Chelsea 2

Kitson bags a timely winner

David Lacey

WEST HAM rose from the gloom of a muddled first-half performance at Upton Park last night to score three times in the second after Vialli had given Ruud Gullit's team the lead.

Dicks's penalty brought the scores level and Kitson put West Ham in front, but with three minutes remaining Mark Hughes, who had come on as a late substitute, headed Chelsea's second goal from Minto's excellent centre.

Still West Ham were not done. In stoppage time, from a corner on the left by Mike Hughes, Dowie headed towards goal and Kitson got the final touch for a crucial winner.

Chelsea's progress to the FA Cup semi-finals and the possible distraction that thoughts of Wembley might bring, plus the absence of Leboeuf with a thigh strain, had offered West Ham, who had won only twice in 16 league matches, some added hope.

Chelsea left Mark Hughes and Di Matteo on their bench and with three goalkeepers unfit gave Colgan, the 23-year-old fourth choice, his first senior game.

West Ham, to add impetus to their midfield, brought Ferdinand forward from the back. Yet Ferdinand's first significant act was in his more usual sweeper's role, as a timely interception denied Vialli the chance to profit from Wise's through-pass.

From the outset Chelsea's passing carried more threat as Wise and Zola sought the usual channels. West Ham's movements tended to break down before they came within scoring range, although Dowie was always going to chase.

Colgan had to wait until midway through the first half to make his first proper save, Mike Hughes producing an awkward, skidding shot after Dowie and Kitson had set up the chance. Soon after this Chelsea were grateful to Petrescu's covering tackle after Kitson had found Hughes advancing towards the near post.

Yet if West Ham took any encouragement from these moments the feeling quickly vanished. After 26 minutes, with his colleagues moving up, Bishop gave the ball away to Zola, who sped away from Breacker on the left before crossing low for Vialli to stroll in and slide the ball past Miklosko.

Just past the half-hour Petrescu blocked a header on the Chelsea line but significantly it had come off one of his own men, Burley. At that stage this seemed to be West Ham's sole hope of a goal.

Then things changed with a couple of half-time substitutions, West Ham replacing Bishop and Ferdinand with Williamson and Porfirio. In the 54th minute Porfirio, released on the left by Williamson's long pass, was brought down by Sinclair as he cut in towards goal, and Dicks's sixth penalty of the season brought the scores level.

Four minutes later West Ham so nearly took the lead. Dicks's thunderous free-kick hit Colgan on the chest and Dowie, quick to pounce on the rebound, saw his shot hit the underside of the bar. Upton Park groaned, but West Ham were in front when, eight minutes past the hour, Dowie flicked on a ball from Porfirio and Kitson strode through to beat Colgan.

West Ham United: Miklosko, Breacker, Bilic, Potts, Dicks; Ferdinand, Bishop, Moncur, M Hughes; Kitson, Dowie.
Chelsea: Colgan; Sinclair, Clarke, Johnsen; Petrescu, Burley, Wise, P Hughes, Minto; Zola, Vialli
Referee: K Burge (Tonypandy).

Holding hard . . . Chelsea's Steve Clarke gets to grips with Iain Dowie during last night's London derby at Upton Park PHOTOGRAPH: CRAIG PRENTIS

Coca-Cola Cup, semi-final, second leg
Middlesbrough 0, Stockport C 1 (agg: 2–1)

Boro wobble on their way to Wembley

Michael Walker

IT HAS taken 121 years of trying but on April 6 Middlesbrough will contest a major cup final at Wembley when they meet Leicester.

Yet, after fallen behind to Sean Connelly's spectacular early goal, Boro endured rather than enjoyed the rest of the game and even when Stockport's Tony Dinning was sent off for striking Fabrizio Ravanelli near the end Boro continued to wobble.

Boro showed Stockport respect by selecting Emerson, even though the Brazilian was on a yellow card from the first leg. But when Emerson released Juninho in the second minute and he in turn supplied Beck, who hit the woodwork, the choice of Emerson seemed justified.

Juninho then warmed Jones's hands the following minute and Boro must have felt they were carrying on from their two Derby victories. But by the fifth minute Middlesbrough's defence had reverted to its notorious unreliability.

Admittedly there appeared little danger when a quick free-kick by Flynn was flicked on by Armstrong. However, Connelly arrived in the box from right-back and speared a volley into the corner. It was some way to score the first goal of your career.

Suddenly what should have been a canter became a race and Marsden almost snatched a second with a powerful effort from a narrow angle that Schwarzer failed to hold. It took Boro some time to regain composure and even when Juninho and Ravanelli combined to set up Hignett, there was still a nervousness about the rearguard.

Smart headers from Beck just before and after half-time camouflage Stockport's ability to expose Fleming and Cox at the other end. It was through the middle, though, that County nearly levelled the aggregate in the 55th minute when Marsden punctured the red barrier only to lose control at the vital moment and lunge into Schwarzer. Rightly, Marsden was booked.

Boro replied with a Juninho lob and a Hignett blast, yet the best opening fell to County. After 70 minutes Festa's pass was intercepted but Cavaco, 12 yards out, hit Schwarzer's legs.

Middlesbrough: Schwarzer, Cox, Pearson, Festa, Fleming, Mustoe (Blackmore, 22min), Emerson, Hignett, Juninho, Beck, Ravanelli
Stockport County: Jones, Connelly, Flynn, Dinning, Todd, Bennett, Marsden, Jeffers (Nash, 87), Cavaco, Mutch, Armstrong.
Referee: P Jones (Loughborough)

Brighton close to being saved

Martin Thorpe

BRIGHTON's future appears secure after a takeover of the club was agreed yesterday. But there was less encouraging news for Bournemouth, who are now one week away from being thrown out of the Football League.

Brighton's co-owners Bill Archer and Greg Stanley yesterday struck a deal with Dick Knight, leader of the consortium trying to take over the club, and his colleague Martin Perry. The deal, still to be ratified by lawyers, followed a fourth round of talks between the two parties at the FA-appointed mediators at the Centre of Dispute Resolution.

The campaign to oust Archer and Stanley has led to vociferous demonstrations by supporters, including a pitch invasion that led to the team, bottom of the Third Division, being docked two league points. The FA is inquiring into an attack by fans on players at the Goldstone Ground last weekend which could mean more lost points.

Brighton must leave the Goldstone at the end of this season and will move in with Gillingham while a new ground is built, but the club's existence seems secure after the takeover by Knight, the fans' favourite and a lifelong Brighton supporter.

As for Bournemouth, a spokesman for the debt-ridden club's receivers admitted yesterday: "We are not very optimistic of avoiding liquidation at this stage. As it stands, the club's membership of the League will terminate on March 20."

The only group interested in rescuing the Second Division club, the AFC Bournemouth Trust, is facing a race against time to formulate a satisfactory takeover plan by next Thursday, the deadline for a winding-up petition brought by the Inland Revenue over a £250,000 bill.

The Trust, set up by a group of concerned fans, tabled a proposal yesterday but it failed to comply with the requirements of Lloyds bank, the receivers Arthur Andersen and the Football League. Now the Trust must try again, otherwise the club, which is more than £4 million in debt, will be liquidated and will lose its League membership.

The Trust's founder Trevor Watkins, a solicitor and lifelong Bournemouth fan, said yesterday that he was confident a new proposal could be made in time but as a precaution he is also trying to persuade the Inland Revenue to extend the winding-up deadline beyond next Thursday.

James Worsley, for the receivers, was more cautious. "If firm proposals can be agreed before March 20 we have a fighting chance. But if no one makes a viable proposal, and the deadline is not extended, there is no alternative but to close the club down."

Sheffield Wednesday 2, Sunderland 1

Stefanovic keeps Owls flying

David Hopps

ONLY the lure of a Uefa Cup place remains to reward Sheffield Wednesday's emergence as the Premiership's most improved side. They went some way towards achieving that aim last night with this victory over a limited Sunderland side, a win ultimately more comfortable than the scoreline suggests.

Sunderland led for 16 minutes in the first half through Kevin Ball, but goals from David Hirst and Dejan Stefanovic restored the sensible order of things and insisted that the threat of relegation will hang over Wearside until the end of the season.

The visitors might have arrived at Hillsborough on the back of a victory against Manchester United but they were the same uncreative, if resolute, bunch that had struggled since Christmas.

Their main hope was that they would catch Wednesday in a lull. For all the Yorkshire side's record of one defeat in 19 league matches, defeat on Sunday at home to Wimbledon in the sixth round of the FA Cup had been a deflating experience.

Twenty desultory minutes drifted by before Sunderland might have profited from the night's first chance, only for Russell to shoot over from eight yards. But they took the lead in the 27th minute with uncommon simplicity, Ball allowed ample time to score from 12 yards after Russell's shot had been blocked.

That shook Wednesday from their lethargy. Whittingham should have scored from Briscoe's pass, but his shot was blocked and from the resulting corner Wednesday equalised three minutes before half-time, Booth heading Pembridge's cross back across the goal for Hirst to swivel and drive home.

Wednesday's superiority had been underlined by the interval, and Sunderland resumed as if resigned to a second half of unremitting defence.

Wednesday's second goal arrived just after the hour. Pembridge played a one-two with Nolan from a corner and jinked inside to hit a dipping shot which Perez did well to push aside, but only into the path of the central defender Stefanovic, who thrashed in his second goal of the season.

Sheffield Wednesday: Pressman; Walker, Stefanovic, Briscoe, Atherton, Whittingham, Nolan, Pembridge, Carbone (Humphreys, 89min), Hirst, Booth.
Sunderland: Perez; Hall, Melville, Ord, Kubicki, Kelly, Bracewell, Ball, Gray (Howey, 82), Russell, Bridges.
Referee: D Gallagher (Banbury).

Scottish Premier Division: Rangers 0, Dundee United 2

Rangers' turn to stumble

Patrick Glenn

DUNDEE UNITED's comprehensive victory not only stretched their unbeaten run to 15 matches but put the championship back on simmer, with Rangers unable to increase their five-point lead. Brilliantly organised, quick and incisive, Tommy McLean's regenerated side simply outplayed the champions.

Celtic's defeat at Kilmarnock the previous night had been widely expected to put Rangers in relaxed mood, but there were lengthy periods in the match when it seemed to have switched them off.

United were generally the sharper side in all areas even before going ahead in the 30th minute, although Rangers had by then gone close with a couple of attempts.

The move that gave the visitors the lead was electrifying. Malpas, having won possession near his own 18-yard line, saw Olofsson bolt towards the inside-left channel and the pass was perfection. The big Swede took the ball in his stride and carried it forward as Winters sprinted through the middle. The cross was perfect too, Winters meeting it with his left foot and sliding the ball far to the left of Goram from 14 yards. It was all done with killing pace and accuracy.

That goal underlined the dreadful finish of Cleland earlier when the Rangers full-back arrived at the far post to meet a low centre from Moore on the right but snatched his shot yards too high.

Durie's miss six minutes after United scored, however, was worse. Miller won a battle with Bowman on the left and cut the ball back to the striker, who, unchallenged, simply scooped the ball into the night sky.

Walter Smith's second-half formation — the midfielder Steven on for the central defender Petric — had no time to settle before United doubled their advantage.

Less than two minutes had been played after the interval when Winters was released down the right, from where he played a long, diagonal cross towards Olofsson. The striker outstripped McLaren and just beat Goram to the touch, prodding the ball over the line from six yards out with his right foot.

Rangers: Goram; Moore, Petric (Steven, h-t), McLaren, Bjorklund, Cleland, Ferguson, Miller, Albertz (McCoist, 63min), Durie, Laudrup.
Dundee United: Dykstra; Bowman, Perry, Malpas, Pressley, Pedersen, Zetterlund, Dolan, Olofsson, Winters, McLaren (McKinnon, 86).
Referee: M McCurry (Glasgow).

Webb resigns after fan abuse

DAVID WEBB has resigned as manager of the Second Division leaders Brentford after being barracked by a section of the club's supporters, *writes Martin Thorpe.*

A club statement yesterday confirmed Webb's desire to leave, although his formal letter of resignation will not be dealt with until Monday, when the chairman Martin Lange returns from the United States. Webb will stay in control of the team in the meantime.

The trouble erupted on Saturday when a few fans called Webb "a waste of space" after Brentford were beaten 2–0 at Preston, their first defeat in 15 games. "With people like that there is no point in carrying on," said Webb. "Why should I take flak like that when we are top of the league?"

Dave Lane, editor of the fanzine Beesotted, said: "The majority of fans are behind Webb, so maybe this is his way of provoking more vocal support of him and the side with three tough games coming up."

Results

Soccer

FA CARLING PREMIERSHIP

Leeds (0) 0 **Southampton** (0) 0
25,913

Sheff Wed (1) 2 **Sunderland** (1) 1
Hirst 42 Ball 28
Stefanovic 63 20,294

West Ham (0) 3 **Chelsea** (1) 2
Dicks 55 (pen) Vialli 26
Kitson 68, 90 M Hughes 87
24,502

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Man Utd	29	16	9	4	57	33	57
Liverpool	29	16	8	5	50	24	56
Arsenal	30	15	9	6	49	26	54
Newcastle	28	14	6	8	54	35	48
Sheff Wed	29	12	12	5	39	33	48
Aston Villa	29	13	7	9	35	27	46
Wimbledon	27	12	8	7	39	32	44
Chelsea	28	11	10	7	44	41	43
Leeds	30	11	7	12	24	31	40
Leicester	28	10	7	11	33	38	37
Tottenham	29	10	6	13	34	38	36
Blackburn	28	7	12	9	28	27	33
Everton	29	8	9	12	36	43	33
Derby	29	7	11	11	31	44	32
Sunderland	30	8	8	14	26	41	32
Coventry	30	6	12	12	28	38	30
West Ham	28	7	7	14	27	39	28
Nottm Forest	30	6	10	14	25	46	28
Southampton	28	6	8	14	37	48	26
Middlesbrough	27	6	7	14	37	49	22

NATIONWIDE LEAGUE
First Division

QPR (0) 0 **Reading** (1) 2
10,316 Morley 2
Maddix 76 (og)

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Bolton	37	21	12	4	80	46	75
Wolverhampton	36	19	8	9	52	35	65
Barnsley	35	17	11	7	59	42	62
Sheff Utd	36	16	10	10	61	42	58
Norwich	37	15	10	12	55	56	55
Ipswich	36	14	13	9	51	44	55
Crystal Palace	35	14	11	10	65	38	53
Port Vale	37	12	15	10	44	43	51
Stoke	35	14	9	12	43	45	51
Tranmere	35	14	8	13	48	46	50
Portsmouth	35	14	8	13	42	39	50
Swindon	37	14	7	16	50	54	49
QPR	37	12	11	14	47	50	47
Oxford Utd	36	13	7	16	48	48	46
Reading	35	12	10	13	47	52	46
Charlton	35	13	7	15	43	50	46
Birmingham	35	12	10	13	41	42	46
Man City	35	13	6	16	44	47	45
West Brom	37	10	14	13	58	62	44
Huddersfield	37	11	11	15	41	52	44
Grimsby	35	8	10	17	47	66	34
Bradford	36	8	10	18	38	60	34
Southend	37	7	12	18	35	68	33
Oldham	34	7	10	17	34	46	31

Second Division

Wrexham (1) 2 **Luton** (1) 1
Bennett 24 (pen), 56 Davis 23
3,342

BELL'S SCOTTISH LEAGUE
Premier Division

Rangers (0) 0 **Dundee Utd** (1) 2
48,192 Winters 29
Olofsson 47

SCOTTISH LEAGUE
Second Division

Stranraer (0) 0 **Hamilton** (0) 1
380 McFarlane 70

PONTINS LEAGUE: Premier Division: Derby 1, Blackburn 1; Liverpool 0, Bolton 2. **First Division:** Aston Villa 3, Huddersfield 2; Blackpool 0, Notts County 2; West Brom 0, Wolverhampton 1; Preston 3, Leicester 0. **Second Division:** Bradford C 3, Hull 1; Burnley 4, Carlisle 2. **Third Division:** Bury 0, Darlington 0; Lincoln 1, Scunthorpe 3; Rochdale 3, Doncaster 0; Scarborough 2, Walsall 1.
AVON INSURANCE COMBINATION: First Division: Bristol C 5, Chelsea 0; Bristol Rvrs 1, Cardiff 0; Charlton 2, Southampton 0; Oxford Utd 5, Arsenal 0; Portsmouth 1, Millwall 0; Swindon 0, Norwich 1.
EUROPEAN U-21 C'SHIP QUALIFIER: Group 3: France 1, Switzerland 0.
FRIENDLY INTERNATIONALS: Sweden 1, Israel 0; Czech Republic 2, Poland 1.

Rugby League

FIRST DIVISION: Whitehaven 13, Featherstone 4.
VARSITY: Cambridge 26, Oxford 22.

Tennis

COPENHAGEN OPEN: First round: F Dewulf (Bel) bt E Alvarez (Sp) 6–1, 6–1; G Raoux (Fr) bt B Steven (NZ) 6–4, 7–5; L Burgsmuller (Ger) bt S Simian (Fr) 6–3, 6–2; F Santoro (Fr) bt P Fredriksson (Swe) 6–1, 6–3; K Carlsen (Den) bt T Larsen (Den) 6–1, 6–3; A Volkov (Rus) bt A Olhovsky (Rus) 6–4, 7–6; M Damm (Cz) bt P Langvardt (Den) 6–2, 6–3; T Carbonell (Sp) bt E Erlich (Isr) 6–2, 6–2; K Ullyett (SA) bt G Solves (Fr) 6–4, 7–5. **Second round:** T Johansson (Swe) bt A Volkov (Rus) 4–6, 6–3, 6–2; K Kucera (Slovak) bt F Santoro (Fr) 6–1, 4–6, 6–1; J Kroslak (Slovak) bt M Norman (Swe) 4–6, 6–4, 6–2.
CHAMPIONS' CUP (Indian Wells, Calif): **First round:** B Black (Zim) bt A Costa (Sp) 6–2, 6–2; M Philippoussis (Aus) bt A Agassi (US) 7–6, 7–6; M Rosset (Switz) bt M Zabaleta (Arg) 6–3, 7–5; J Novak (Cz) bt M Goellner (Ger) 5–7, 6–4, 6–2; G Ulbrich (Cz) bt H Gumy (Arg) 4–6, 6–1, 6–0; C Woodruff (US) bt J Gimelstob (US) 6–4, 6–7, 6–3; J Bjorkman (Swe) bt A Gaudenzi (It) 6–1, 6–3; J Sanchez (Sp) bt R Reneberg (US) 6–4, 5–7, 6–4. **Second round:** T Muster (Aut) bt A Voinea (Rom) 6–2, 6–4.
EVERT CUP (Indian Wells, Calif): **Third round:** L Davenport (US) bt R Dragomir (Rom) 6–2, 6–1; V Williams (US) bt I Majoli (Cro) 7–5, 3–6, 7–5; M J Fernandez (US) bt K Po (US) 6–2, 6–3.

Alpine Skiing

WOMEN'S WORLD CUP FINALS (Vail, Colorado): **Downhill:** 1, P Wiberg (Swe) 1min 43 [illegible] Seizinger (Ger) 1.43.61 [illegible] H Gerg [illegible] 1, Wiberg [illegible] Gerg 1.0[illegible]

Badminton

ALL-ENGLAND CHAMPIONSHIPS (Birmingham): [illegible] Hoyer [illegible] (China) [illegible] Sun-Ho [illegible] 15–12 [illegible] (China) [illegible] 15–3 [illegible] (Eng) [illegible] Pongratz [illegible] (China) [illegible] 15–12 [illegible] (Den) [illegible] P Knowles [illegible] 8–15, 15- [illegible] Olsson [illegible] (Mal) bt [illegible] **Women's** [illegible] (Japan) [illegible] Ma-Ree [illegible] bt L Sor[illegible] 12–10, 11–4; Y Zhaoying (China) bt A Sondergaard (Den) 11–1, 11–0; K Yonekura (Japan) bt J Muggeridge (Eng) 11–7, 11–4; K Ji-Hyun (Kor) bt Y Mizui (Japan) 11–5, 11–7; Y Yan (China) bt M Rasmussen (Den) 11–0, 11–1; R Kyung-Min (Kor) bt M Sorensen (Den) 11–6, 11–6; W Chen (China) bt C Nakayama (Japan) 12–9, 11–1; H Jingna (China) bt K Morgan (Wales) 11–4, 11–7; C Martin (Den) bt M Borg (Swe) 11–6, 11–5; P Jin-Hyun (Kor) bt J Hsu-Ching (Tai) 11–2, 11–1; [illegible]

Bowls

BRITISH INDOOR C'SHIPS (Ballymoney): [illegible]

Hockey

BRITISH UNIVERSITIES C'SHIP FINALS: [illegible]

Cycling

PARIS-NICE RACE: [illegible]
TIRRENO-ADRIATICO RACE (Italy): [illegible] Fondriest 2; 4, G Colombo 3; 5, L Van Bon (Neth); 6, G Planegonda both same time

Snooker

THAILAND OPEN (Bangkok): **Second round:** S Hendry (Scot) bt J White (Eng) 5–2; F O'Brien (Ire) bt K Doherty (Ire) 5–4; G Hann (Aus) bt M Williams (Wales) 5–1; S Lee (Eng) bt A Hamilton (Eng) 5–1; N Bond (Eng) bt J Wattana (Thai) 5–4; R O'Sullivan (Eng) bt S Davis (Eng) 5–2; P [illegible] J Parrott (Eng) [illegible]

Fixtures

(7.30 unless stated)

Soccer

[illegible]

Basketball

BUDWEISER LEAGUE: Sheffield v London (7.45), Leopards v Hemel (7.0)

Hockey

REPRESENTATIVE: Army v British Police (11.0, Portsmouth); Royal Navy v [illegible]

Ice Hockey

SUPERLEAGUE PLAY-OFFS: Bracknell v Basingstoke (8.0), Manchester v Cardiff [illegible] Slough [illegible] (8.0) [illegible] Fife [illegible]

Sport in brief

Tennis

The American teenager Venus Williams, rated by many the most exciting prospect since Martina Hingis, claimed her first top-10 scalp in beating Iva Majoli of Croatia 7–5, 3–6, 7–5 in a 2½-hour match at the Evert Cup in Indian Wells.

The 16-year-old, who has largely been kept away from tournament play and so has a world ranking of only 211, has come through two qualifying rounds and three main-draw matches to earn a quarter-final with her compatriot Lindsay Davenport.

Hockey

Outstanding attacking play by David Mathews, a National League player with Guildford, helped Brunel University College retain the British Universities title by beating Heriot-Watt 7-3 in yesterday's final at Milton Keynes, *writes Pat Rowley.* Mathews scored four of Brunel's goals, three from corners. Loughborough won the women's title for the ninth time in 10 years, beating Birmingham 3–1.

Sailing

The Royal Lymington Cup will be Britain's first major regatta held under new international racing rules to be introduced on April 1, *writes Bob Fisher.* The world's top match racers, trying for £15,000 in prize-money, will face some tricky situations with rules as new to the umpires as they are to the competitors.

Snooker

The coach Jim Chambers and the former world billiards champion Mark Wildman have been co-opted to the board of the World Professional Billiards and Snooker Association. They were invited by the three new members elected yesterday, the former chairman Rex Williams, the commentator and coach Jim Meadowcroft and the billiards player Bob Close.

Cricket

Lull after the storm as England opt for Graveney

Mike Selvey on Raymond Illingworth's successor, who it is hoped will take the spotlight off the chairman of selectors job

DAVID GRAVENEY, a less illustrious bearer of a famous cricketing surname, will be confirmed this afternoon as England's lowest-profile chairman of selectors in the 50 years since A J Holmes made himself so invisible he might have been played by Claude Rains.

The 44-year-old former Gloucestershire, Somerset and Durham spinner has been a selector for two years under Raymond Illingworth and succeeds the man whose turbulent three-year spell, first as chairman and then as England supremo, ended last October.

The appointment represents a complete reversal of previous policy by the new England Management Committee, headed by its Lancashire chairman Bob Bennett. After the end of Illingworth's spell in charge, the recommendation of a working party set up by David Acfield, the cricket chairman of the then Test and County Cricket Board, was that the Yorkshireman's successor should be high-profile, have significant Test-playing experience, and be well remunerated.

The report was not binding, however, and the Acfield working party in any case was superseded by the advent of the English Cricket Board and its management offshoot, the EMC, at the start of the year.

Despite a 22-year career that brought him almost 1,000 first-class wickets, Graveney was never selected for England. Of 21 chairmen of selectors before him, only three — Holmes immediately after the second world war, Percy Perrin in 1939, and Harry Foster in 1921 — had never played international cricket.

Nor will the post represent a path to a numbered offshore bank account. Having been the Professional Cricketers' Association treasurer for 15 years, Graveney became the players' union's full-time general secretary at the end of 1994, and such payment as he receives as chairman of selectors, reduced in line with the redefined role, will be offset by a cut in salary from his current employers. In effect he will be doing the job for a small fee plus expenses.

Graveney, who was interviewed last Wednesday by Lord MacLaurin and Tim Lamb, chairman and chief executive respectively of the ECB, faced little competition. The first-class counties had been encouraged to submit names of potential applicants but they were mindful that Bennett's committee was not required to stay within the bounds of such nominations and was more than likely to do its own thing, so only one name, believed to be the former Hampshire captain Mark Nicholas, another non-Test player, was forthcoming from the ranks.

Graham Gooch, who had thrown his hat in the ring last autumn, subsequently backed off when he decided to play a final season for Essex, although it is thought that a demand for a salary of £60,000 a year cooled things at the board's end. The former England captain may remain a selector, however.

Hands on . . . Graveney, also secretary of the players' association, takes over a redefined role PHOTOGRAPH: ADRIAN MURRELL

Graveney has twice before been linked with the chair. A year ago, after a disastrous and rancorous winter for the England team, he was persuaded to stand, at the instigation of Warwickshire, as a stalking-horse against Illingworth. But after the closing date for nominations his employer instructed him to withdraw, believing the two roles were incompatible and against the best interests of the association's members.

Then in the autumn he again expressed interest, but with much the same response from the players' association, which sought clarification of whether the chairman's role had been revised.

The main stumbling-block concerned matters of discipline, with the association feeling that a chairman of selectors taking a player to task did not sit comfortably alongside his requirement to represent him at any disciplinary hearing. Since then, however, the job definition has been revised, and henceforth discipline will be Bennett's domain, with comments on performance the responsibility of the coach or captain.

Graveney will be responsible for all matters of selection, although it is not yet clear whether he alone will choose the captain. That, presumably, would need to be ratified by Bennett in any case.

Graveney's role may be understated but it remains significant and it brings the England process more in line with that operating in the rest of the world.

Hollioake takes helm at Surrey as Stewart steps down

Mike Selvey

ALEC STEWART, who once vied with Mike Atherton for the England captaincy and still harbours hopes, may have given Adam Hollioake a leg-up towards the job when he resigned as Surrey captain yesterday and handed over to the 25-year-old all-rounder.

Hollioake led the England A team on their successful tour of Australia this winter and the maturity and confidence of his captaincy impressed many, not least the tour manager David Graveney, the new chairman of selectors.

His opportunity at the highest level may come sooner rather than later should the England management decide to take a long-term view, particularly with an eye to one-day internationals.

Atherton is expected to be confirmed as captain for the forthcoming Ashes series, and probably the preceding one-day internationals as well. However, it is recognised that Test and limited-overs cricket are nowadays of equal significance and that they require fundamentally different approaches.

So, though it is possible to captain efficiently in both disciplines, and convention has dictated that the roles overlap, using different captains for each should not be ruled out. England's recent performances in limited-overs internationals, particularly abroad, have left much to be desired and Atherton's captaincy, in a game that frequently requires innovative thinking on the hoof, has often been too staid.

If England are to compete strongly in the next World Cup, planning should start now and that could begin with targeting a potential captain. Hollioake, a talented one-day player whose immediate international ambitions might be restricted to that discipline, might well start by leading England in a limited-overs tournament in Sharjah in December.

Stewart has cited the increased pressure of domestic and international cricket, as well as the demands England are making on him in the combined role of top-order batsman and wicketkeeper, as the reasons for relinquishing the Surrey role after five seasons in charge.

"In the light of the possible England demands becoming heavier and my job of keeping wicket in the majority of Surrey games, I'm stepping down," he said. "I believe that this is in the best interests of both the club and myself, so that I can return the best results with bat and gloves.

"This is something I have thought long and hard about, especially as I believe we [Surrey] will be a very successful side over the next few years, but I am sure it is the right decision."

Hollioake, who is in Perth, acknowledged that Stewart would be a hard act to follow. "I will do my best to uphold his high standards," he said.

Motor Racing

Senna may have hit 'small bump'

THE former Formula One driver Pierluigi Martini told a court yesterday that he and other drivers had reservations about the surface of the Imola track before Ayrton Senna died in a crash there in the San Marino Grand Prix in 1994. Martini said he, Senna and others had noticed in the weeks before the race "a small bump" in the Tamburello bend which reduced a car's ability to keep the racing line.

He also said Senna had complained to him three weeks before the race that the handling of his car was "nervous".

The Italian was testifying as a prosecution witness at the manslaughter trial of six defendants, including the Williams team boss Frank Williams and two Imola officials. All six deny the charges.

Senna died when his Williams car left the track and hit a wall at around 135mph. Prosecutors blame a combination of a faulty weld in the steering column and poor circuit design at Tamburello.

"There was a small bump in the middle that unsettled the cars," Martini said. "I, Senna and others mentioned it 15 days before the grand prix. The track officials had it ground down a bit but the situation only improved slightly."

Asked afterwards whether such a bump could cause a steering column to break, Martini said he had never known one to. He said Senna's fast lap time suggested his tyres were fully warmed up.

● Max Mosley, president of the sport's governing body Fia, has denied that he will benefit financially from the proposed stock-market flotation of Bernie Ecclestone's Formula One company, writes Alan Henry.

Rugby Union

Charvis joins Wales victims

Paul Rees

COLIN CHARVIS last night dropped out of the Wales side to play England on Saturday because of a groin infection. The Swansea flanker is having tests to discover the cause of the problem.

His place is likely to be filled by the Ebbw Vale captain Kingsley Jones, whose last international appearance was against Australia three months ago. Charvis is also doubtful for the World Sevens in Hong Kong beginning next week.

Injury-ravaged Wales name their side this evening and Jonathan Davies is set to be selected for the 31st and final time for Wales. His Test career would then end as it began 12 years ago, against England at the National Stadium.

The 34-year-old Davies has played a full part in Wales's training sessions this week, one of the few players to do so. He has been deployed at outside-half with Neil Jenkins remaining at full-back.

"All I can do is hope," said Davies, who this week announced that his Wales career would end after the match. "It will be an emotional day; it is the last international before the National Stadium is rebuilt and Will Carling could also be playing his last international."

Wales had a closed training session yesterday and they will have fitness reports on four players today: the wing Ieuan Evans, centre Scott Gibbs and props Christian Loader and David Young. The outside-half Arwel Thomas and the second-row Mark Rowley have already been ruled out through injury.

Gibbs did not train because of a strained neck, and Evans, who is considering retiring from international rugby after the Lions' tour of South Africa in the summer, had only a light run because of a damaged calf muscle.

● France, aiming to take the Five Nations Championship in style by completing the Grand Slam on Saturday, have again been forced into changes for the game with Scotland at the Parc des Princes.

The French have had to replace both half-backs and a prop. The Pau fly-half David Aucagne takes over from the injured Alain Penaud, and Guy Accoceberry replaces Penaud's Brive team-mate Philippe Carbonneau, also injured, at scrum-half in the side announced by Jean-Claude Skrela yesterday. The Brive prop Didier Casadei wins his first cap in place of Christian Califano, automatically suspended after being sent off for punching in a league match last weekend.

FRANCE: J-L Sadourny; L Leflamand, C Lamaison, S Glas, O Venditti; D Aucagne, G Accoceberry; F Pelous, O Magne, A Benazzi (capt), H Miorin, O Merle, F Tournaire, M Del Maso, D Casadei.

Rugby League

Robinson lays blame for bogus deal on colleague

Nick Varley

THE Wigan chairman Jack Robinson yesterday blamed a former board member, John Martin, for a bogus transfer deal.

Robinson admitted to a jury at Bolton Crown Court that he had told police "a pack of lies" when he denied trying to set up a fictional sale of the prop Neil Cowie. "I regret what I said. I was afraid Mr Martin would withdraw his money and I was trying to protect him and myself," he said.

Cross-examined by Alan Conrad for the prosecution, he added: "If John Martin had taken the quarter of a million pounds out of the club at that point we would never have survived it."

Martin, who resigned his seat on the board and withdrew £200,000 of his stake last month, was initially arrested on conspiracy charges with Robinson after the Wigan Observer received a solicitors' letter threatening a libel action over an article said to have caused the collapse of the Cowie deal.

Robinson, aged 55, of Haigh, Wigan, denies intending to pervert the course of justice between February and March 1996 by seeking to procure false evidence against the newspaper. The prosecution alleges he asked Alfred Davies, then chief executive of Leeds, to write letters to confirm first a £150,000 fee for Cowie and then the deal's collapse after the paper published an untrue story saying the player had been in a drinking spree. A 50-50 split of the damages was allegedly offered.

Robinson, questioned by Rodney Klevan QC, defending, admitted making the suggestion to Davies. But he said he had been acting under orders from Martin, Cowie's father-in-law, and he had telephoned Davies "knowing he would say no". He apologised to Davies for telling police "wicked" untrue things about him, including denying their friendship and saying Davies was feeling "rejected" after failing to become chief executive at Wigan.

The case continues.

Offiah Stoops and hopes to conquer again for the Broncos

David Burke

MARTIN OFFIAH will end his six-month exile from rugby league when he plays for London Broncos in their Super League opener against the champions St Helens at The Stoop on Sunday. But the 31-year-old former Test winger will be available initially only for London's first two matches.

After that Offiah will switch codes again to assist Bedford in Courage League Two; after playing for London at Warrington tomorrow week he will turn out for Bedford against Rotherham less than 24 hours later. He is likely to miss six matches for London until he returns to play against his former club Wigan on May 9.

Tony Rea, the Broncos' chief executive, said: "It is unfortunate but the arrangement with Bedford is that they have first call on his services until the end of their season."

Offiah, who scored four tries in three matches after signing for London last August, will play on the wing against St Helens and the coach Tony Currie said: "Martin won't have found it too much of a burden playing on the wing in rugby union and he is still superbly fit."

Offiah, who attended a reception at the House of Commons for the boxer Lennox Lewis after a press conference at The Stoop, said: "It will be a baptism of fire against St Helens but I am looking forward to returning to league, where there is more freedom and more scope to score tries."

● Paul Fitzpatrick adds: Wigan are having talks with Castleford Tigers about Tony Smith, the Great Britain half-back listed by the Tigers at £150,000, and if the Warriors sign him the departure of Shaun Edwards to London may be hastened.

Wigan's coach Eric Hughes said yesterday, however, that they want to hold on to their most experienced and talented players. They need to with the news that Rob Smyth, their talented 20-year-old winger, is unlikely to play this season after having a knee reconstructed.

Kelvin Skerrett, the former Wigan prop, has joined Halifax Blue Sox for the Super League season.

Badminton

Muggeridge fades away

Richard Jago in Birmingham

JOANNE MUGGERIDGE launched an impassioned attack on the Badminton Association of England after failing to live up to early promise and losing in the second round to the Japanese qualifier Kanako Yonekura at the Yonex All-England Championships here yesterday.

England's leading women's singles player looked pale and distracted by the enduring conflict over her fitness, which has caused her to be thrown out of the national squad, and was beaten 11–7, 11–4. Though she again looked more sprightly than she had for a couple of years, she faded after leading 6–5.

"I get no support from the BAE when I am on court," she said. "There are five coaches and none of them support me. I was completely alone. I found it very hard to concentrate."

Muggeridge says her fitness is now satisfactory, but the England manager Steve Baddeley again disagreed. "She's a very talented player. But today we saw that over two games she was not able to maintain her level."

Defeats for Peter Knowles, Chris Haughton, Kelly Morgan and Mark Constable, who led the world champion Heryanto Arbi by a game and 9–3 before losing 10–15, 15–10, 15–9, brought to an end British interest in the men's singles.

Golf

Olazabal's comeback trail takes in the US Masters

Michael Britten in Lisbon

JOSE MARIA OLAZABAL confirmed yesterday that he will play in the US Masters next month. The Spaniard, who won at Augusta three years ago, intends to warm up for his return to championship golf by also contesting the Freeport McDermott Classic in New Orleans the previous week.

But he will not compete in the Players Championship at Sawgrass from March 27–30, regarded by the majority of the world's top players as an unofficial fifth major and an essential part of the build-up for the Masters, which starts on April 10.

"It has to be a step-by-step comeback," Olazabal said yesterday on the eve of the Portuguese Open at Aroiera on the Costa Azul, 10 miles south of here. "I will also play in next week's Turespaña Masters in Gran Canaria, but three tournaments in a row in America would be too much of a risk at this stage."

His appearance here will be the second of his comeback to the European Tour after an 18-month absence because of problems with his feet. By finishing 12th in the Dubai Desert Classic he underlined the progress he has made — from what was originally diagnosed as rheumatoid arthritis — since becoming a patient of the Munich specialist Dr Hans-Wilhelm Müller-Wolfahrt.

Ballesteros . . . reticent

"I have not taken any medication for two months," he said, "and after playing each day I go to the physiotherapy unit for treatment on the lower back and then I have a hot bath. After that I do some toe exercises. The bother is still there but now it is discomfort rather than pain, and I have had no setbacks so far."

Whereas an upbeat Olazabal was happy to discuss his problems, Severiano Ballesteros, who has suffered from back trouble for several years, was unusually reticent about his visit last week to the German known as "Dr Feelgood".

"It is a very private matter and I don't really need to talk about it," he said, preferring to dwell on the eight birdies he made in a 68 in the pro-am, a considerable improvement on the 12-over-par 84 he shot in Dubai.

Four other members of the 1995 Ryder Cup team — Sam Torrance, David Gilford, Mark James and Howard Clark — and last week's Moroccan Open winner Clinton Whitelaw are pursuing a first prize of £58,330.

the week

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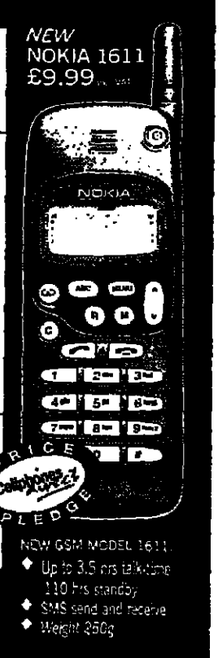

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Coome Hill bathed in Gold, page 13

Brighton back on dry land, page 14

Pressure back on Collymore, page 14

New man goes in to bat for England, page 15

Sports Guardian

CHELTENHAM GOLD CUP

Sun shines on the bookies

Chris Hawkins

BRILLIANT sunshine is keeping punters in the dark at this year's Cheltenham Festival while the bookmakers make hay.

The drying conditions have upset the form in race after race, and the firmer ground has made many horses doubtful for today's Tote Gold Cup, the showpiece of the festival. Everyone, it seems, is confused — apart from the bookies.

David Hood of William Hill said: "Punters have been holding back their bets because of the uncertainty of the going. Business on the Gold Cup has not been brisk during the last couple of days, but we are winning at the moment. The sun is certainly shining on us."

The final field for today's Tote Gold Cup will not be known until trainers have walked the track this morning to test the going.

Despite two inches of rain last month and continuous watering last week, the course has dried up and three of the leading fancies for the race — Coome Hill, Dorans Pride and Addington Boy — may not run.

With many of the best-backed horses finding themselves unable to act on the firm ground, the meeting has provided bookmakers with a bonanza. Indeed, only one favourite has won in the first two days of the meeting. That was J P McManus's Isatabraq, who is believed to have won his owner, a professional punter, £100,000 by taking the first race yesterday.

Bookmakers are expecting to take £2 million in wagers on the Gold Cup and believe much of it will be placed on One Man, who is a definite runner and is suited by fast ground. William Hill yesterday cut his price from 9-1 to 7-1.

Last year One Man faded to finish a distant sixth behind Imperial Call — who is the 5-1 favourite for today's race and will not be troubled by the ground — but allegations that he shirks a battle have irked his trainer Gordon Richards.

"He'll win and I'll be having people's guts for garters, especially the red-haired man from the Sporting Life who called him a coward," he said. Richards yesterday withdrew The Grey Monk from the race because of the ground and he may take out Addington Boy today.

Michael Hourigan, who trains the Irish horse Dorans Pride, has been expressing worries about the ground all week. Should the eight-year-old be pulled out of the race, his owner Tom Doran will be a loser twice over as he has backed his horse to win £250,000.

Andrew back just for kicks

Robert Armstrong reflects on an old master's return to the England shirt

ROB ANDREW was named last night as a replacement for England's final Five Nations match against Wales at Cardiff on Saturday when the fly-half Paul Grayson failed a fitness test. Mike Catt moves into the starting line-up.

Andrew, called up yesterday morning by the England coach Jack Rowell, stands the chance of a remarkable head-to-head with his fellow 34-year-old Jonathan Davies. They played each other four times before Davies switched to rugby league. Kevin Bowring, the Wales coach, names his side today.

If Andrew gets on the field, he would win his 71st cap. He joined Rowell's expanded match squad for training at Bisham Abbey yesterday saying: "Basically I've been asked to cover a one-off situation. Paul is doubtful and Mike may have to step in. I will assist, if necessary, for this game only.

"It did surprise me when I got the call from Jack but it's not the start of a comeback trail. Obviously goalkicking is an issue for England and I am happy to help out. A strange set of circumstances has created the situation in which I could be on the same pitch as Jonathan Davies."

Andrew last played for England in the 1995 World Cup semi-final defeat by New Zealand. Since then he has left Wasps and become director of rugby at Newcastle, announcing at the time his retirement from international rugby. However, his world-class goalkicking skills will give England extra insurance if Catt is injured or has a bad day with the boot.

One of the ironies of England's goalkicking dilemma is that Andrew's excellent form this season has prevented Tim Stimpson, Newcastle's England full-back, from developing his place-kicking skills in Courage League matches.

Bath, too, prefer Jonathan Callard to Catt as their goalkicker, yet Catt will have to kick the goals as he returns to the side after a three-match absence during which Grayson has kicked superbly.

"Place-kicking is an issue," admitted Rowell, who drafted Callard into the squad before securing Andrew's agreement to help out. Earlier in the day the England coach said: "Rob will be on the bench if needed because he is experienced at this level as well as being a No. 10 and a place-kicker. Alex King of Wasps is not a place-kicker but I think what has happened this week will have a positive effect on King."

However, Nigel Melville, Wasps' director of rugby and a former England scrum-half, begged to differ. "I think it's an enormous step back," he said. "I have nothing against Rob but I bet he is as surprised as me. He has been put on the bench just to kick goals; that's the state of English rugby.

"Everyone is complaining about not having an English No. 10 who can play rugby. We are getting paranoid about goalkickers, yet the French took England apart last week without a recognised goalkicker. We shouldn't get too hung up on goalkickers."

Notwithstanding Melville's misgivings, Rowell had to cover all possible contingencies by enlisting the best available goalkicker for what *may well be a close match*, with England aiming for a Triple Crown. Neither of England A's young fly-halves, King and Gloucester's Mark Mapletoft, will be encouraged by his exclusion from the match squad of 21, though privately both might agree that *the cauldron of the Arms* Park might not be the best place to make an England debut.

Phil de Glanville, the England captain, believes the pressure to bring specialist goalkickers on to the bench would be eased if players in *positions other than No. 10 or* No. 15 were trained to kick goals. "Centres and second-row forwards should also learn how to do it," he said, mindful that Christophe Lamaison, the France centre, and John Eales, Australia's second-row, are both excel*lent goalkickers.*

For the moment, though, the ball is at Andrew's practised foot.

Wales injury woes, page 15

On the bench . . . Rob Andrew, summoned from international retirement, faces the cameras before training TIM OCKENDEN

Whingeing Poms are past a joke

Paul Weaver

WHEN Bob Bennett, the chairman of the embryonic England Management Committee, opens the inquest on England's wretchedly unhappy tour of Zimbabwe today he may permit himself a brief, quizzical smile.

Bennett is the man who managed England's hugely successful and harmonious A team tour of that country in 1990. What, he may ask himself, went wrong this time?

This is not to compare an A team tour to that of a full international side, with all its media attention and national expectation. Nor is it to say that that tour seven years ago did not have its occasional frustrations.

My abiding memory is of a leisurely stroll back to my Harare hotel with an elderly colleague. Suddenly his smiling features hardened with anxiety and he quickened his step. "Something I ate . . . must excuse me . . . need bathroom . . . urgent," he said, and broke into a little knees-together trot.

A few minutes later in the hotel lobby he was banging his fist on the reception desk. "Well, if I haven't got my key, and you haven't got my key, where is the fucking thing?" demanded this usually most moderate of men.

The receptionist fixed him with a charred smile. "It's the first Friday of the month, sir," he explained with exaggerated patience. "It's being washed." And he pointed to a porter in the corner with a scrubbing brush and a bucketful of filthy water. Beside him someone was burnishing furiously so that rows of shimmering keys winked in the lobby light. My hysterical colleague plunged his hands into the black water, which lapped around his elbows, and keys spilled everywhere. He never did find his.

The humour of the situation may have been lost on him, just as it was a few years ago on Don Mosey, the old cricket commentator of those joyous, Arlott-Johnston days, when we shared a desperately bad hotel in Faisalabad, Pakistan.

Mosey was attempting to explain to the manager, who spoke no English, that his toilet was blocked. "No, no, you don't understand," said the exasperated Yorkshireman, as he pinched his nose and pulled an imaginary chain. "Toilet [and then he played an equally imaginary Geoff Boycott-like forward defensive] blocked!" The bemused manager walked away.

On England cricket tours stories such as these abound. But in Zimbabwe this winter England's cricketers appeared totally to lose their sense of humour. Even worse, they appeared to turn their collective back on a country which is, for most of us, a pure delight.

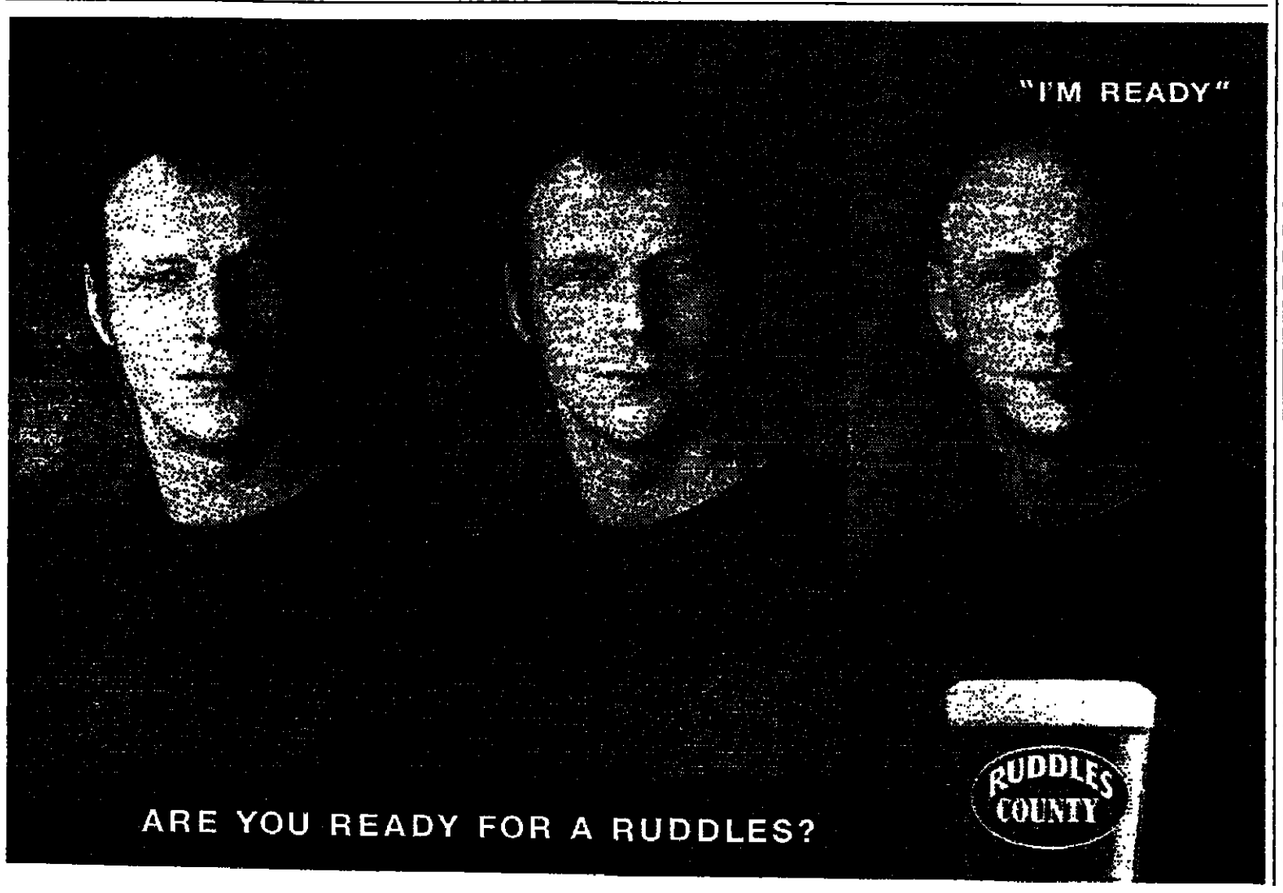
Their attitude was insular, negative, sulky, Pooterish and sometimes downright rude. When they pitched up in New Zealand a few weeks later some talked of how nice it was to be back in civilisation. To lose three of the five international matches (the other two were drawn) was bad enough. To alienate the press and become genuinely hated by many locals was something of a PR disaster, and the ECB knows it.

How will England fare in such countries as China if the ICC is serious about making cricket a global sport? Or in Orlando, where the man from Walt Disney who wants to stage cricket there must be the only American attempting to make a slow buck?

England's cricket coaches and managers seem singularly ill-equipped to make their players worldly-wise. Keith Fletcher, that most pleasant of men, seems only truly happy in rural Essex with a fishing rod in his hands. Ray Illingworth, on his many travels, never lost that expression of bewildered disappointment that the rest of the planet did not resemble Farsley High Street, and today David Lloyd's very tones seem to pine for the lost Lancashire of George Formby. Perhaps cricket coaches have better things to do. The tour manager on this occasion, however, the eagerly innocent man-boy John Barclay, surely faces the sack for what went wrong in Zimbabwe.

I HAVE plenty of time to pen these idle thoughts from a hotel room in Port Elizabeth, on South Africa's Eastern Cape. After all, the telephone works only occasionally, the television's sound and picture appear to work on a shift basis, and yesterday only half my laundry turned up.

The cricket teams of South Africa and Australia are also in the hotel, preparing for tomorrow's Test match, and despite everything are enjoying it massively. Crucially, they have not lost their sense of humour. They are laughing loudest, one senses, at whingeing Poms.



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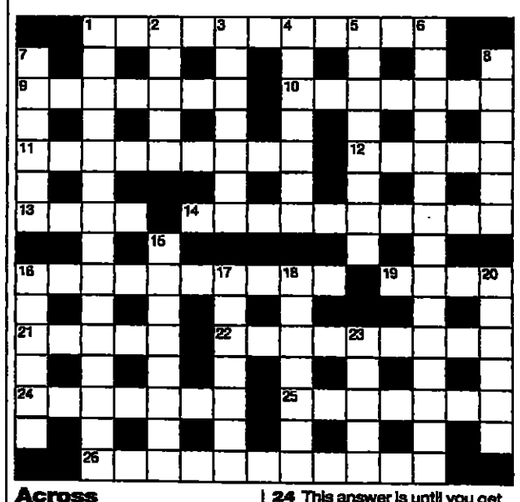

Across

1 Orders glue when out in supplies (11)
9 Mock light's working without oxygen (7)
10 Fence structure I used with cattle (7)
11 Offer lottery tips in a short while (9)
12 Distinctive mark X included alright (5)
13 The beano's hosts provide it (4)
14 Bananas and nuts? (10)
16 What impressionists do with inferior material? (10)
19 Send back the cakes for a check (4)
21 Find time for the healthy and fashionable (3,2)
22 Supporters of the opening at the Garden? (9)
24 This answer is until you get it (7)
25 Surprise one with sticky donuts? (7)
26 Lower docks in Europe? (11)

Down

1 One a bit short, skint miller's put in trouble (15)
2 Wood, the musicologist (5)
3 Glyn gets het up and long-winded (7)
4 Match with hard ball? Call in the field (5-2)
5 Winner of marathon does (not in restricting items) (8)
6 Attach to one's arms to maintain position (5,2,4,4)
7 Chelsea initially has edge with respect to tie (4-2)
8 Game for Poles taking place in unusual site (6)
15 Mac's the artist involved with a layer of paint (8)
16 Arrival of many people in continuous change (6)
17 Artless young girl part in genuine acting (7)
18 Clear of all charges over dance game (7)
20 Close description of doctor's manner, lacking degree? (5)
23 It helps no end when climbing (5)

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